

# Concordia Theological Monthly



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*Address all communications to the Editorial Committee in care of  
the Managing Editor, Walter R. Roehrs, 801 De Mun Ave.,  
St. Louis 5, Mo.*

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# Concordia Theological Monthly

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## The Doctrine of Justification in the Lutheran Confessions

By HERBERT J. A. BOUMAN

### I

IN the 1538 edition of his commentary on Galatians, Luther speaks of "this one and firm rock, which we call the doctrine of justification, that is, that we are delivered from sin, death, and devil, not through ourselves (nor certainly through our works which are of lesser value than we ourselves), but through outside help, through the Only-begotten Son of God, Jesus Christ."<sup>1</sup> "If the article concerning justification falls, everything falls."<sup>2</sup> "This is the chief article of the whole Christian doctrine, which comprehends the understanding of all godliness. It is, therefore, of prime importance that it be well understood and constantly emphasized."<sup>3</sup> "As I often emphasize, the doctrine of justification must be diligently observed. In it are involved all other articles of our faith, and so long as justification is properly taught, it will be well with all other doctrines also."<sup>4</sup>

The church that gratefully bears Luther's name did not follow Luther's personal opinions and emphases in all things; the church is more than one man. There is no doubt, however, that she wholeheartedly incorporated her blessed teacher's views on justification in her official doctrinal position as enunciated in her Symbols, both as to content and importance.<sup>5</sup> In his book *The Religious Bodies of America* the sainted Dr. F. E. Mayer discusses the unique place of the Lutheran Church among other bodies under the heading: "The Soteriological Approach to Christian Doctrine."<sup>6</sup> He asserts that justification is the *material principle* of Lutheran theology. That is to say "that all theological thinking must begin at this article, center in it, and culminate in it. As the various facets of the dia-

mond catch, refract, reflect the light, so the phrase 'justification by faith alone' gives brilliance to every phase of Christian revelation, and in turn each facet of Christian truth sheds new brilliance on this so-called central doctrine, whether it is viewed as justification by faith, or as the work of Christ, or as the distinction between Law and Gospel, or as faith in Christ, or as the doctrine of the 'righteousness before God.'"<sup>7</sup>

The Lutheran Confessions strongly support this estimate. The "doctrine of grace and of the righteousness of faith . . . is the chief part of the Gospel," "*praecipua pars evangelii*" (AC XXVI 4).<sup>8</sup> "The Gospel compels us to insist in the churches upon the doctrine of grace and of the righteousness of faith" (*ibid.*, 20). "It is necessary that the chief article of the Gospel be preserved, to wit, that we obtain grace freely by faith in Christ" (AC XXVIII 52). It is the "chief topic of Christian doctrine," "*praecipuus locus doctrinae christianae*" (Ap IV 2). "This is the very voice peculiar to the Gospel, namely, that for Christ's sake, and not for the sake of our works, we obtain by faith remission of sins," "*haec est ipsa vox evangelii propria*" (Ap IV 274). This is not a Lutheran idiosyncrasy, but "*tota ecclesia confitetur*," "the entire church confesses" (Ap IV 322, 389). "Who, however, does not see that this article, that by faith we obtain the remission of sins, is most true, most certain, and especially necessary to all Christians?" (Ap IV 398.) Justification is the "*primus et principalis articulus*." "Of this article nothing can be yielded or surrendered, even though heaven and earth, and whatever will not abide, should sink to ruin" (SA-II, I 5). The second generation of Lutherans had the same conviction: "This article concerning justification by faith is the chief article in the entire Christian doctrine, without which no poor conscience can have any firm consolation or can truly know the richness of the grace of Christ" (FC SD III 6).

## II

That this emphasis is no mere lip service on the part of the Lutherans is clear from the manner in which other doctrines are treated in relation to justification. Our Confessions are markedly uninterested in viewing doctrine in the abstract, academically, philosophically, theoretically. The Triune God is brought near to us

because of His attribute of "*immensa bonitas*," of "infinite goodness" (AC I 2). Man is seen in his desperate need of God's justifying act, because in his natural condition he is "without the fear of God, without trust in God, and with concupiscence," and those who ascribe inherent powers to man are condemned because they "obscure the glory of Christ's merit and benefits" and "argue that man can be justified before God by his own strength and reason" (AC II). The specific concern of the Lutherans in this matter is that "it will not be possible to recognize the benefits of Christ unless we understand our evils" (Ap II 50). The tremendous mysteries of Christology are not there to furnish material for theological debate, but "that He might reconcile the Father unto us, and be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for all actual sins of men" (AC III). The office of the ministry has no reason for independent existence as a rank, order, or office, but has meaning only in its function of administering Gospel and Sacraments, through which the Holy Spirit creates justifying faith. Faith, moreover, is seen from the point of view of its content, or object, "*quod Deus . . . propter Christum iustificet*," "that God . . . for Christ's sake justifies" (AC V). In stressing the necessity of good works the Lutherans hasten to append the caution that we must not "rely on these works to merit justification before God." (AC VI 1. See also XX 9.) Good works are the inevitable consequence of justifying faith (Ap IV 114: "although love necessarily follows," "*necessario sequitur dilectio*"). In the definition of the church the emphasis rests on the true believers gathered around the Gospel and Sacraments rightly taught and administered (AC VII, VIII). All Lutheran Sacramentology is soteriological. "Through Baptism is offered the grace of God" (AC IX 2). "It works forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe this." The "chief thing" in the Sacrament of the Altar lies in the "words here written: Given and shed for you for the remission of sins." The real value of confession lies in the absolution (AC XI), which asks us to "regard it as certain that the remission of sins is freely granted us for Christ's sake" (Ap XI 2). The heart of repentance is not to be found in an external penance, but in "faith, which is born of the Gospel, or

of absolution, and believes that for Christ's sake sins are forgiven" (AC XII, cf. Ap XII 2, 30, 35, 36, 53, 76, 84, 95). The right use of the Sacraments calls for faith in the promises of the Gospel (AC XIII 2). Not only in their thetical statements do the Lutheran Confessions link the several doctrines with justification, but also the antitheses are formulated from this vantage point.

The adoration of the saints is repudiated because Scripture "sets before us the one Christ as the Mediator, Propitiation, High Priest, and Intercessor" (AC XXI 2). Abuses connected with the Mass must be abolished because "they depart from the Holy Scriptures and diminish the glory of the Passion of Christ" (AC XXIV 24). Over against the mechanical and externalized enumeration of sins in confession the Lutherans urge the precious comfort of absolution and the importance of "faith to believe such absolution as a voice sounding from heaven, and that such faith in Christ truly obtains and receives the forgiveness of sins" (AC XXV 4). The idea that the traditions of men are profitable to merit grace is repudiated, because, "first, the doctrine of grace and of the righteousness of faith has been obscured by it, which is the chief part of the Gospel" (AC XXVI 4). The evils of the monastic system consist in this, that its devotees "taught that by this kind of life they merited forgiveness of sins and justification before God" (AC XXVII 11), and the question is asked, "What else is this than to detract from the glory of Christ and to obscure and deny the righteousness of faith?" (Ibid., 38.) Of the errors and abuses associated with episcopal powers it is said that "these errors crept into the church when the righteousness of faith was not taught clearly enough" (AC XXVIII 62). Whether bishops, in addition to their proper function of exercising the Office of the Keys, also have certain powers delegated *iure humano* does not cause the Lutherans much concern so long as the doctrine of justification suffers no infringement.<sup>9</sup> This does not mean that the specific *locus* "De iustificatione," considered by itself, is all that the Lutherans consider indispensable. Rather, they regard the entire *corpus doctrinae* as bound up inextricably with justification. All doctrines have their place in this doctrine. All doctrines stand or fall with the doctrine of justification.<sup>10</sup>

## III

Looking at the doctrine itself, we find it precisely stated in Article IV of the Augustana: "Also they teach that men cannot be justified before God by their own strength, merits, or works, but are freely justified for Christ's sake, through faith, when they believe that they are received into favor, and that their sins are forgiven for Christ's sake, who, by His death, has made satisfaction for our sins. This faith God imputes for righteousness in His sight. Rom. 3 and 4."

This brief definition is maintained essentially throughout the Lutheran Symbols. It is, however, amplified and expounded as regards its implications, especially in Melancthon's exhaustive treatise in Article IV of the Apology. The significance of this assertion will become apparent in a later chapter of our discussion. Some of the material is foreshadowed by reference to the German text of AC IV, fully equivalent in authority with the Latin. The German form lays stress at the outset on "Vergebung der Sünde und Gerechtigkeit vor Gott." Corresponding to the Latin: "Gratis iustificentur propter Christum per fidem," is the German phrase: "Vor Gott gerecht *werden* umb Christus willen durch den Glauben." The "hanc fidem imputat Deus pro iustitia coram ipso" of the Latin is meant to reproduce the German: "Dann diesen Glauben will Gott fur Gerechtigkeit vor ihm halten und zurechnen." Following the somewhat more precise outline of the Latin text, we proceed to examine the component factors of this most vital doctrine.

A. *Negative*

"Quod homines non possint iustificari coram Deo propriis viribus, meritis, aut operibus," "that men cannot be justified before God by their own strength, merits, or works." This flat negation of any human contribution to the sinner's justification is the corollary of "propter Christum per (solam) fidem," "for Christ's sake through faith (alone)." A Scripturally realistic anthropology and soteriology go hand in hand. The doxology of divine monergism is in direct proportion to a clean-cut repudiation of any kind or degree of synergism and a clear-eyed evaluation of human limitations.

St. Paul's and Luther's exuberant glorification of the grace of God in Christ springs from the background of an overwhelming awareness of sin.

The Lutheran Confessions mirror this truth throughout. Take a quick glance at the Augsburg Confession, and note the multiplication of expressions like these: "... not for the sake of our own merits," "non propter nostra merita" (AC V); "... we should not rely on those works to merit justification before God," "per ea opera iustificationem coram Deo mereri" (AC VI); "... saved without works," "salvus sit sine opere" (AC VI). "They also are rejected who command us to merit grace through satisfactions of our own" (AC XII 10). Man's will "has no power . . . to work the righteousness of God" (AC XVIII 2). "Our works cannot reconcile God or merit forgiveness of sins, grace, and justification" (AC XX 9). Against the extravagant claims made for the meritorious virtue of the monastic life, it is clearly stated that "righteousness is not to be sought from our observances and acts of worship" (AC XXVIII 37). The attachment of any justifying merit to any activity of man is wrong. "It is against Scripture to establish or require the observance of any traditions, to the end that by such observance we may make satisfaction for sin, or merit grace and righteousness. For the glory of Christ's merit suffers injury when, by such observances, we undertake to merit justification" (AC XXVIII 35, 36). Particularly in the Apology Melancthon demolishes every optimistic view concerning man's capabilities. The Scholastic, synergistic phrase that natural man can and should do what is in him, *facere* "quod est in se," is rejected (Ap IV 9). No matter what names may be given to man's alleged contributions, whether "habitus" or "meritum congrui," or "ratio," or "dilectio," all are man's own powers and works (*proprii vires, propria opera*), and, as such, all are ruled out. In a series of statements Melancthon rejects as false the propositions:

1. "That we merit the remission of sins by our works."
2. "That men are accounted righteous before God because of the righteousness of reason."<sup>11</sup>
3. "That reason, by its own strength, is able to love God above all things, and to fulfill God's Law."

4. "That men do not sin who, without grace, do the commandments of God" [ausserlich] (Ap IV 25—28).

In short, "it is impossible to love God unless the remission of sins be apprehended first by faith" (Ap IV 36). All these sentiments are succinctly comprehended in the familiar Catechism phrases that I am "a lost and condemned creature" and that therefore "I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him." Hence all the manifold blessings of God come to me "without any merit or worthiness in me." We must confess that "we are worthy of none of the things for which we pray, neither have we deserved them. . . . For we daily sin much and indeed deserve nothing but punishment."

#### B. *Positive*

1. "Gratis iustificentur," freely, "aus Gnaden." By denying to natural man any spiritual powers, any capabilities whatsoever toward his justification, we are driven inexorably to the conclusion expressed in Scripture that our justification is the work exclusively of grace. This doctrine of *sola gratia* finds constant and unequivocal expression in the Confessions. Lest the Lutheran emphasis on the necessity of good works be understood to imply any ascription of merit to these works, Ambrose (Ambrosiaster) is quoted in support of the thesis that we receive the remission of sins "gratis," "ohne Verdienst" (AC VI). "Through Baptism is offered the grace of God" (AC IX). "The Gospel compels us to insist in the churches upon the doctrine of grace" (AC XXVI 20).<sup>12</sup> Melancthon in Ap IV enters in great detail into this facet of the doctrine. Those who deny that men receive remission of sins "gratis" are guilty of burying Christ (Ap IV 18). The Gospel is "the Gospel concerning the gratuitous remission of sins and the righteousness of faith" (Ap IV 20). This promise does not depend on our merits, but "freely offers the remission of sins and justification" (Ap IV 41).<sup>13</sup> References could easily be multiplied in which the terms "gratis," or "gratuita," or "ex mera gratia," "by pure grace," are used, or in which "not by works" is juxtaposed with "but by grace."

*Sola gratia* emphasizes the Scriptural truth that the initiative always rests with God, that nothing in man has any claim on God's goodness or can contribute anything of merit to God's act. *Sola*

*gratia* lets God be God, glorifies the majesty of His wisdom, power, and love, and magnifies the honor of Christ. *Sola gratia* drives the pardoned child of God to his knees in endless and amazed adoration: "All this purely out of fatherly divine goodness and mercy!" It fills him with the confidence to pray that God would grant all requests "by grace" and reminds him to receive the divine blessings "with thanksgiving."

2. "Propter Christum," "for Christ's sake." This is the concrete expression of *sola gratia*. Apart from Christ there is no grace; there is only wrath and judgment. The Lutheran definition of grace as "favor Dei propter Christum" points up this inseparable connection. The whole Christology is here involved. The church has always shown tremendous concern for the doctrine of Christ, His person, His natures, His states, His office and work. The church has warred fiercely against any and every vitiation of this doctrine, and to safeguard it, the church has spared no efforts at precise and unequivocal creedal formulations. These formulations, being human, have not always done full justice to the concrete reality, encumbered, as they often were, by abstract philosophical terminology, but the motivation is unmistakable. The true church knows what is at stake. Eternal salvation is bound up with the preservation of the truth concerning Christ. Nicaea, Constantinople, Ephesus, Chalcedon, Augsburg—all these are solemn reminders of the fact that the doctrine of Christ has a direct, "existential," eschatological bearing on every man's situation. There can be no such thing as an academic, impersonal, theoretical interest in Christology. In the Athanasian Creed the somewhat ponderous affirmations concerning Christ are set in this frame: At the beginning, "it is necessary to everlasting salvation," and at the end, "for our salvation," "pro nostra salute." The Nicene Creed states that Christ, of whom it avers the *homoousios* in the most sonorous tones, came down from heaven "for us men and for our salvation," and was crucified "for us," "pro nobis." Even the Apostles' Creed, simpler and perhaps less directly conditioned by heresy, can express faith in the forgiveness of sins only because it has first rehearsed the history of "Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord."

The Lutherans declared themselves to be in direct succession of the church's Christology and likewise placed it into the service

of soteriology. Not only do they incorporate the ancient Symbols in the *Book of Concord*, but in their particular Confessions they link their theology (doctrine of God) to the "decretum Nicaenae synodi" (AC I) and their Christology to the *Symbolum Apostolorum* (AC III). The facts concerning the Son of God have the purpose of teaching us that He came to "reconcile the Father unto us, and be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for all actual sins of men" (ibid.). The definition of justification elucidates the *propter Christum* with "by His death has made satisfaction for our sins." *Propter Christum* therefore means infinitely more than the example of His life, or the time-tested truth of His teaching, or the impact of His "martyrdom," or the deathlessness of His influence on His followers. *Propter Christum* admits of no fragmentation or compartmentalization. It involves the whole Christ, "true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary"; the Christ who is my Lord, who, "by His holy precious blood and His innocent suffering and death has redeemed me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil." *Propter Christum* embraces, above all, the vicarious nature of His holy Passion. It is *Christus pro nobis*: "by His death has made satisfaction for our sins" (AC IV).<sup>14</sup> The suffering of Christ was "an oblation and satisfaction" (AC XXIV 25). The death of Christ is "a satisfaction not only for guilt, but also for eternal death" (Ap XII 140; *Triglot*, p. 295). Christ is "Mediator" (AC XXI), "propitiation" (Ap IV 46, 179).

For us, then, to believe in Christ, to relate the *propter Christum* to ourselves personally, means that *propter Christum* our sins are forgiven; it means the recognition and appropriation of the *merita Christi*, the *beneficia Christi*.

The richness of the content in the phrase *propter Christum* is simply beyond comprehension. It expresses the fact that God "*sich ganz und gar ausgeschüttet hat und nichts behalten, das er uns nicht gegeben habe*" ("completely poured forth Himself and withheld nothing from us that He has not given us," LC II 26).<sup>15</sup>

3. Per fidem, "durch den Glauben," "through faith." Justification is exclusively God's act. He planned it, motivated by His unmerited grace, and He executed His plan through His Son Jesus Christ. Man's merits and works are altogether excluded as a con-

tributary factor. The glory belongs wholly to God. This does not mean, however, that man's role is that of bystander or more or less unconcerned spectator. Man is involved personally and to the uttermost. It is for man, for me, that God pitied and planned, for me that God sent His Son, for me that Jesus Christ suffered and died and rose again, for me that God had His Spirit-filled Gospel preached. No presentation of justification that omits my vital involvement, response, and appropriation is complete or Scriptural. For this truth the Confessions make provision by a singularly massive emphasis on faith. No single word is featured so prominently as *fides*, *fides* qualified by *sola*, *fides* placed in opposition to works. "Qui credit in Christum, salvus sit, sine opere, sola fide" (AC VI). "Hanc tantum fide consequimur," "This we obtain only by faith" (AC XX 9).

Faith is the "opus Spiritus Sancti" (AC V; Ap IV 64). Faith is described as not signifying "merely the knowledge of the history," but "a faith which believes also the effect of the history — namely, this article: the forgiveness of sins, to wit, that we have grace, righteousness, and forgiveness of sins through Christ" (AC XX 23). According to its various aspects, faith is pictured as fiducia (AC XX 26), confidere (AC XXVII 49), vera cognitio Christi ("true knowledge of Christ," Ap IV 46), haec beneficia nosse, "to know these benefits" (Ap IV 101); "thus to think of Christ [to seek from Him the remission of sins], thus to worship Him, thus to embrace Him, is truly to believe" (Ap IV 154); obedientia erga Evangelium (Ap IV 308); assentiri promissioni Dei (Ap IV 48); velle et accipere (ibid.). Viewed psychologically, then, from within the believer himself, faith is seen to involve the whole man. Faith is an activity of the intellect, the will, and the emotions. Faith may even be called a "virtus" (Ap IV 227), a good quality in man.

However — and this our Confessions are at pains to make abundantly clear — faith justifies not because of any intrinsic value or goodness, not because it has any meritorious or supplementary function with respect to the justifying act of God. Faith justifies because of its object. Faith justifies "not because it is a work that is in itself worthy, but because it receives the promise" (Ap IV 86).<sup>16</sup>

The objects of justifying faith are variously stated as Christ, the merits of Christ, the mercy of God, the Gospel, the promise of God, the promise of the remission of sins and justification, the promise of Christ. All of these, of course, amount to the same thing. Faith in Christ, if it be genuine, necessarily includes confidence in God's entire *ordo salutis*, in His mercy, His Word, His power, His faithfulness, as well as unreserved acceptance of the full implications of the *propter Christum* as detailed above.<sup>17</sup> For this reason AC IV can say that it is faith itself which God imputes for righteousness ("Dann diesen Glauben will Gott für Gerechtigkeit vor ihm halten und zurechnen"). Thus we may speak not only of a "per fidem," but also of a "propter fidem" (Ap IV 177). This substitution is possible because "fides sit ipsa iustitia" (Ap IV 86). How this is to be understood is made clear in these words: "But faith, properly so called, is that which assents to the promise.<sup>18</sup> Of this faith Scripture speaks" (Ap IV 113). "But because the righteousness of Christ is given us by faith, faith is for this reason righteousness in us imputatively, that is, it is that by which we are made acceptable to God on account of the imputation and ordinance of God. . . . Faith is truly righteousness because it is obedience to the Gospel" (Ap IV 307 f.). Manifestly, faith is given no synergistic role. At the same time the intimate, inseparable connection between God's gift and man's appropriation is emphasized.

4. Iustificentur, are justified. (More fully in the German text: "dass wir Vergebung der Sünde bekommen und vor Gott gerecht werden"). We have thus far in the doctrine of justification traveled a glorious road. Reproducing the heart of Scripture, the Confessions sing a hymn in praise of the ineffably marvelous mercy of God, who condescended to our totally sinful, lost, and helpless situation and reconciled us all to Himself in Christ. The finished redemption wrought by our Lord constitutes the heart of the Gospel, which by the Holy Spirit creates in man the saving acceptance of faith. This, our Symbols aver, is the doctrine of justification. To the elaboration and defense of these truths Melancthon devotes the greatest amount of space in the Apology, Article IV. Because of the breadth and comprehensiveness of the discussion, a large number of terms are used by Melancthon in his attempt to unfold the doctrine in all its aspects. Much of the discussion, and perhaps also

much of the terminology, may have been determined by the formulations of Roman theologians and the framers of the Confutation. All of this has prompted many learned theologians through the years to submit Article IV of the Apology to searching scrutiny and exhaustive analysis as to the scope of Melanchthon's *Rechtfertigungslehre*.<sup>19</sup> In view of the controversies surrounding the "later" Melanchthon the prospect of finding at least the germs of "Melanchthonianism" in the Apology has proved to be tempting indeed. It will therefore be constructive to review some of the terminology employed in connection with justification.

#### IV

Already in the Augsburg Confession several formulations appear, partly anticipating the variety in the Apology. It is interesting to compare both the German and the Latin wordings in Article IV of the Augsburg Confession. German: "Dass wir Vergebung der Sunde bekommen und vor Gott gerecht *werden* . . . so wir glauben, dass Christus fuer uns gelitten habe und dass uns umb seinen willen die Sunde vergeben, Gerechtigkeit und ewiges Leben geschenkt wird." Latin: ". . . iustificentur . . . cum credunt se in gratiam recipi et peccata remitti." Article V. German: "Dass wir durch Christus Verdienst . . . ein gnädigen Gott haben." Latin: ". . . quod Deus . . . iustificet hos, qui credunt se propter Christum in gratiam recipi."

Article VI. German: "Vergebung der Suende und Gerechtigkeit." Latin: "Remissio peccatorum et iustificatio." Article XXIV: "Dass wir fur Gott Gnade erlangen." Latin: "Nos coram Deo iustificari." It seems that the brief, simple formulations of the Augsburg Confession present no particular problem. The irenic interest of the Augsburg Confession dictated a somewhat more general terminology, without, of course, sacrificing the truth.

In the Apology, however, Melanchthon was compelled to take issue with Roman assertions and attacks on the Lutheran position. It was natural that there should be a multiplication of terms. By far the most common equation is: *iustificatio* is the same as "consequi remissionem peccatorum" (Ap IV 1, *passim*). This is done in conscious reference to the church's affirmation in the Apostles' Creed.<sup>20</sup> The basic concept: justification is equal to forgiveness of sins, is amplified by the addition of "reconciliation" (Ap IV 18).

The terms are interchangeable: "reconciliatio seu iustificatio" (Ap IV 182). "Fide iustificemur coram Deo, reconciliamur Deo" (Ap IV 386). To this is added a third term: "et regeneremur" (ibid.). This, in turn, is amplified by the statement: "Iustificare significat ex iniustis iustos effici seu regenerari," "out of unjust men just men are made, or reborn" (Ap IV 72). And yet still more: "significat et iustos pronuntiari seu reputari," "pronounced or accounted just" (ibid.).<sup>21</sup> The idea of imputation occurs repeatedly: "accounted righteous before God," "reputantur iusti" (Ap IV 48); "for His sake we are accounted righteous," "iusti reputemur" (Ap IV 69); "imputed freely," "gratis imputari" (Ap IV 89); "pronounced righteous in a forensic sense," "usu forensi iustum pronuntiari" (Ap IV 251); "acquit a guilty one and declare him righteous, but on account of the righteousness of another," "aliena iustitia" (Ap IV 305); "righteousness imputatively" (Ap IV 307). Another term introduced into the discussion is "vivificatio," "quickening" (Ap IV 366). The list of formulations has not been exhausted. Enough have been mentioned to show the variety and complexity of treatment as well as the problems that may arise.

A number of questions suggest themselves. Is it Melancthon's purpose to give a precise, carefully systematized presentation of the doctrine of justification? Does he use the various terms always in the same sense? Does he, for example, think of justification in a strict, limited sense, including only the objective, one-time declaration of God on the basis of Christ's redemptive work, or in a wider, more general sense, extending also to conversion and the new life? Is there perhaps a combination, or even a mingling, of both concepts? Does "faith" always mean only the passive, receptive appropriation on the part of man of God's completed act, or is the term broadened to embrace also the fruits of faith? Yes, as some have alleged, may we perhaps find even the seed of synergism in his presentation? Does justification imply only the imputation of a foreign righteousness to a sinful being, a *iustum pronuntiari*, or does it involve a total transformation, a *iustum effici*? Are there progressive stages of justification? These problems have, as a matter of fact, evoked a goodly volume of literature.<sup>22</sup>

What shall we say? Was Melancthon's work hasty and slipshod? Was his own thinking confused and perhaps even contra-

dictory? Does he manifest synergistic leanings? In short, what precisely, was Melanchthon trying to prove?

After subjecting the Apology to repeated scrutiny, it was this writer's dominant impression that Melanchthon tried within the limitations of human language to present the grand doctrine of justification in all its fullness, to pull all the stops, as it were, in developing all the variations upon the central theme: justification is wholly the act of divine grace *propter Christum*, received by faith. At the very beginning of the discussion (Apology IV) the theme is stated: "that men obtain remission of sins, not because of their own merits, but freely for Christ's sake through faith in Christ." Faith is in constant reiteration presented as the divinely wrought means of appropriation, in constant antithesis to anything that smacks of being an *opus* or *meritum* of man. At times Melanchthon thinks of justification in terms of its objective aspects, then as seen subjectively from man's point of view, then again in both directions. Now Melanchthon presents justification as a momentary act, now with the inclusion of its blessed results. If we may speak of one outstanding emphasis in Apology IV, it would seem to be *sola fides*. What systematization there is appears thus to be conditioned by the implied and expressed works-righteousness of Roman theology. This is also the conclusion of Engelland<sup>23</sup> and Schlink.<sup>24</sup>

That Melanchthon's sometimes indiscriminate formulations could be ambiguous and furnish the occasion for misunderstanding became evident in the generation of intra-Lutheran controversies, mainly after Luther's death, which were definitively resolved in the Formula of Concord. The names of Osiander, Stancarus, Flacius, and others bring to mind many of the battles that raged around justification within the Lutheran camp especially when the vacillations and ambiguities of the aging Melanchthon, who wanted nothing so much as surcease from theological strife, were read back into the Apology and thus provided a constant supply of ammunition.

The decisive character of the role of the Formula of Concord dare not be underestimated. Nor may the later symbol be played off against the earlier ones. According to its own claim the Formula of Concord is the "*gründliche, lautere, richtige und endliche Wiederholung und Erklärung etlicher Artikel Augsburger Confession*"

(Title). The Formula of Concord is "*für den rechten, christlichen Verstand der Augsburgerischen Confession*" (Preface). Specifically, the framers of the Formula want to "abide firmly and constantly in the doctrine of the righteousness of faith before God (*de iustificatione fidei coram Deo*), as it is embodied, expounded, and proved from God's word in the Augsburg Confession and the Apology issued after it" (FC SD III 66).

This claim of the Formula of Concord should be taken seriously. Because the formulations of the Augustana and the Apology had been subjected to the most critical review by friend and foe for upwards of 40 years, and because they had been shown to be open to varying, if not contradictory, interpretations, and therefore had proved in a sense inadequate, the Formula of Concord endeavored to safeguard the correct understanding by more precise terminology, even to the extent of supplying a corrective, not so much to the language of the former confessions as to a false interpretation of it. The history of the church reveals other instances of this procedure. When subsequent developments and controversies have shown existing creeds to be no longer adequate for the new situation, the church has risen to meet the need, not by repudiating her former confessions but by clarifying and strengthening them with new formulations.

This principle is clearly applied by the Formula of Concord to the doctrine of justification as presented in the Augsburg Confession and the Apology. If we ask: What is involved in the *propter Christum*? the Formula answers: It is "the entire Christ, according to both natures, in His obedience alone, which as God and man He rendered to the Father even unto death, and thereby merited for us the forgiveness of sins and eternal life" (FC Ep III 3); "the righteousness of the obedience, suffering, and death of Christ, which is imputed to faith" (FC SD III 32); "the entire person of Christ, who as God and man is our Righteousness in His only, entire, and complete obedience" (SD III 55. See also SD III 56—58). If the question has to do with the nature of justifying faith, or the total exclusion from justification of all kinds of works, before, in, or after justification, the Formula offers unequivocal definitions (cf. Ep III 4, 5, 6, 10; Ep IV 7; SD III 31, 37, 38). How shall we understand the Apology when it uses terms like "regeneratio" and

"vivificatio" in connection with justification? Hear the Formula of Concord: "When, in place of this [*vocabulum iustificationis*], the words *regeneratio* and *vivificatio* . . . are employed, as in the Apology, this is done in the same sense" (Ep III 8). Rejected is the teaching that renewal and works belong to our righteousness before God (Ep III 20, 21). "Since the word *regeneratio* is sometimes employed for the word *iustificatio* . . . it is necessary that this word be properly explained, in order that the renewal which follows justification may not be confounded with the justification of faith, but that they may be properly distinguished from one another" (SD III 18. See especially the immediately following paragraphs). Finally, the word "justification" is most carefully defined. To "justify" means "to declare free from sins," "*absolvere a peccatis*" (Ep III 7). "Accordingly, the word *justify* here means to declare righteous and free from sins, and to absolve one from eternal punishment for the sake of Christ's righteousness, which is imputed by God to faith" (SD III 17. Note the comprehensive definition in SD III 9 ff.).

It may be that the Formula of Concord itself does not cover completely every facet of the wonderful truth of justification. We have heard Melancthon say (Ap IV 72) that "justify" signifies both "*ex iniustis iustos effici*" and "*iustos pronuntiari*." We also remember that the German speaks of "*gerecht machen, fromm werden*." May these expressions not emphasize the truth that he whom God *declares* righteous is, in fact, *made* righteous, totally righteous (cf. Ap IV 222), "pure and fresh and sinless" in God's holy eyes? Not in a synergistic, *gratia infusa* sense, of course. We *are* righteous, the holy people of God, the *communio sanctorum*, by virtue of a *iustitia aliena*, the radiant perfection of Christ, appropriated by our hearts' trust in God's promise. We *are* righteous because of the *remissio peccatorum*. "In order, therefore, that troubled hearts may have a firm, sure consolation, also, that due honor be given to the merit of Christ and the grace of God, the Scriptures teach that the righteousness of faith before God consists alone in the gracious reconciliation or the forgiveness of sins" (SD III 30).

One further accent of the Confessions with regard to the doctrine of justification must be pointed out, because it is especially com-

forting to the Christian in his daily concern with his sin. Justification, in its full declaratory sense, is a daily, ongoing process. ". . . it is evident that justification signifies not [only, *non solum*] the beginning of the renewal, but the reconciliation by which also we afterwards are accepted" (Ap IV 161). ". . . Christ does not cease to be Mediator after we have been renewed. They err who imagine that He has merited only a first grace [*tantum primam gratiam*]. . . . Christ remains Mediator, and we ought always to be confident that for His sake we have a reconciled God, even although we are unworthy" (Ap IV 162, 163). Beautifully Luther: ". . . although the grace of God is secured [*erworben*] through Christ, and sanctification [*Heiligkeit*] is wrought by the Holy Ghost through the Word of God in the unity [*Vereinigung*] of the Christian Church, yet on account of our flesh which we bear about with us [*noch am Hals tragen*] we are never without sin. Everything, therefore, in the Christian Church is ordered to the end that we shall daily obtain there nothing but the forgiveness of sin through the Word and signs, to comfort and encourage our consciences as long as we live here" (LC II, 54, 55). Thus, with ever-greater appreciation of the grace of God, we state it most simply, yet adequately, as we do in the Small Catechism: ". . . in welcher Christenheit er mir und allen Gläubigen täglich alle Sünden reichlich vergibt"; "in which Christian Church He daily and richly forgives all sins to me and all believers."

For all that, neither Luther nor Melancthon nor Chemnitz nor Walther nor Pieper can ever do full justice to this high and holy, yet inexpressibly tender and comforting truth. I can't even begin. But my concern must be to attempt to give the proper emphasis to each aspect of justification, God's eternal grace in Christ, my personal response created by the Holy Spirit, the transforming power in my life, and, as the sum of all, my endless and holy hallelujahs before the throne of the Lamb that was slain for me and has reconciled me to God by His blood and restored me to full fellowship with God. In this way I shall, by the grace of God, be preserved both from a mechanical view of justification and from synergistic perversions. Both abridge the *solī Deo gloria*.

St. Louis, Mo.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. *Sämtliche Schriften*, St. Louis ed., IX, 9, my translation. WA XL-1, 33.
2. *Ibid.*, St. L., IX, 44; WA XL-1, 72.
3. St. L., IX, 129; WA XL-1, 168.
4. St. L., IX, 376; WA XL-1, 441.
5. Cf. FC SD III 67.
6. *The Religious Bodies of America* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1954) pp. 143 ff.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 142.
8. The references to the Confessions are cited according to the paragraphing as found in the Latin text of *Die Bekenntnisschriften der Ev.-Lutherischen Kirche*, 2d ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1952). These paragraph references coincide with those in the Latin text of *Concordia Triglotta* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1921), with one exception. Art. IV of the Apology, "De iustificatione," in the *Bekenntnisschriften* is a unit comprising 400 paragraphs, while in the *Triglotta* Art. IV (II) runs to par. 121. Here a new Art. (III) begins. Hence any reference to Ap. IV from 1 to 121 will be the same in both editions. Any reference to paragraphs beyond 121 may readily be found in the *Triglotta*, under Art. III, by subtracting 121 from the paragraph numbered. E.g.: Ap IV 200 in the *Bekenntnisschriften* corresponds to Art. III 79 in the *Triglotta*.
9. Cf. Luther: "Hoc impetrato, scilicet quod solus Deus iustificet, non solum volumus Papam in manibus portare, imo etiam ei osculari pedes." *Com. ad Gal.* WA XL-1, 181.
10. Luther, *ibid.*, p. 168: "Is principalis est doctrinae Christianae articulus in quo cognitio totius pietatis sita est. Ideo maxime refert, eum bene scire et perpetuo inculcare." Page 441: "In eo enim comprehenduntur omnes alii fidei nostrae articuli, eoque salvo salvi sunt et reliqui."
11. German: "Auch ist's Lüge und nicht wahr, dass ein Mensch vor Gott könne gerecht und fromm werden durch seine Werke und äusserlich Frömmigkeit."
12. Cf. AC XXVIII 52: "Denn es muss je der furnehme Artikel des Evangelii erhalten werden, dass wir die Gnad Gottes durch den Glauben an Christum ohn unser Verdienst erlangen."
13. "Lauter aus Gnade bietet er an Vergebung der Sünden." Cf. 43: "So wir aber vor Gott fromm und gerecht werden allein aus lauter Gnade und Barmherzigkeit, die in Christo verheissen ist, erfolgt, dass wir durch unsere Werke nicht fromm werden."
14. "das uns umb seinen willen die Sunde vergeben, Gerechtigkeit und ewiges Leben geschenkt wird."
15. See this entire section for a superb summation, which Luther concludes with the words: "Aye, the entire Gospel which we preach is based on this, that we properly understand this article as that upon which our salvation and all our happiness rest, and which is so rich and comprehensive [so reich und weit] that we never can learn it fully."
16. "... nicht derhalben, dass unser Gläuben ein solch köstlich rein Werk sei, sondern allein derhalben, dass wir durch Glauben, und sonst mit keinem Ding, die angebotene Barmherzigkeit empfaen."
17. Cf. Ap IV, 53: "... haec tria obiecta: promissionem, et quidem gratuitam, et merita Christi tamquam pretium et propitiationem."
18. "... wenn mir mein Herz und der heilige Geist im Herzen sagt, die Verheissung Gottes ist wahr und ja."

19. For a representative listing of theologians and a concise summary of their investigations on this subject the reader is directed to: Hans Engelland, *Melanchthon, Glauben und Handeln* (München: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1931), pp. 541 ff. See also Edmund Schlink, *Theologie der lutherischen Bekenntnisschriften*, 3. Auflage (München: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1948), pp. 134 ff., fn. 15, 16.
20. Cf. Ap IV 51: ". . . ubi certe ponitur hic articulus: remissionem peccatorum."
21. ". . . das Wort iustificari auf zweierlei Weise gebraucht wird, nämlich für bekehrt werden oder neu geboren, item für gerecht geschätzt werden." Cf. 76—78.
22. Engelland (n. 19, above), p. 559, mentions Loofs, G. N. Bonwetsch, E. F. Fischer, v. Frank, P. Gennrich, R. Seeberg, C. Stange, as including the new spiritual life in justification, and Eichhorn, Koestlin, Kunze, Lipsius, Nitzsch, Oehler, O. Ritschl, Thieme, Warko, Zitzlaff, as restricting justification to "ein neues religiöses Verhältnis zu Gott."
23. Engelland, p. 559: ". . . das sola fide . . . das Thema der ganzen Rechtfertigungslehre in der Apologie. . ."
24. Schlink (n. 19, above), pp. 136 f., fn. 16: "Überschüttet vom Reichtum der Gnadengaben, die durch das Wort der Vergebung zuteil werden, bekennt in Ap IV die Kirche diesen Reichtum in der Unbefangenheit und Überschwänglichkeit beschenkter kindlicher Freude, ohne die Gabe im einzelnen klar zu unterscheiden oder gar in ihren Aussagen über sie eine bestimmte Reihenfolge einzuhalten. Entscheidend bleibt, dass sie alle Gnadengaben sind und alle allein um Christi willen durch den Glauben empfangen werden" (emphasis original). See also pp. 141 ff.

# The Religious Peace of Augsburg

By THEO. HOYER

This year marks the 400th anniversary of the Religious Peace of Augsburg, an event regarded so highly and of such importance in the history of the Lutheran Reformation that the 100th, 200th, and 300th anniversaries were celebrated throughout the Lutheran Church in the respective years. Our fathers have regarded it as a special intervention of God to save the Reformation from total collapse. In an article sketching the history of this Diet of Augsburg one of the early leaders of the Missouri Synod, F. C. D. Wyneken, calls the adoption of this peace treaty "the end of the Reformation, when, after a long struggle, by God's grace, the most valuable treasure of the church was attained: freedom" (*Lutheraner*, September 25, 1855). Others, outside our circles, recognize the importance of this Diet and its resolutions; the noted Roman Catholic historian Karl Brandi speaks of it as "the most important Diet of the century after Worms," its resolutions "the most perfect expression of the dawn of a new time." Present-day church historians differ somewhat in their evaluation of the Augsburg Peace; they seem inclined to stress the mistakes made, the incompleteness, the indefiniteness of the provisions adopted. A brief examination of the "context" — the background, the needs, the problems confronting the responsible members of the Diet, and the possible solutions of them — should be of value.

The background, the events leading to the Treaty of Passau, 1552, was discussed in detail in an earlier article (*CONC. THEOL. MONTHLY*, XXIII, 401); hence a brief summary will here suffice to show the why and the wherefore of the Peace of Augsburg, 1555.

The first trial of Luther and his followers (Worms, 1521) had ended in a total condemnation of the Reformation movement; Luther, already excommunicated, was banned; all loyal citizens were admonished to help enforce the edict against Luther. That it was not actually enforced was due to the fact that the head of the Empire was kept busy outside Germany by wars against France and the pirates on the Mediterranean; and within Germany, while

only a few of the territorial princes had more or less adopted Luther's cause, all of them were greatly incensed against the enemies of Luther in Rome; most of them chronically jealous of each other; not one of them dared an attempt to carry out the Edict for fear of inciting civil war. Hence, while the Edict was on the program of the Diets of Nürnberg in 1522 and 1524, nothing was done about it.

To the first Diet of Speier, 1526, the Emperor had sent an ultimatum: The Edict of Worms was to be enforced; he himself was coming to lead the action. The Lutheran cause had by this time gained enough supporters that the discussion was prolonged; a deadlock resulted; but before the Diet adjourned, notice was brought that the Emperor was no longer so friendly toward Rome; the Pope had formed an alliance with France and both were now at war against him; instead of coming to Speier, Charles was on the way to Rome to sack it in 1527. The Diet realized that it was poor policy to encourage Roman supporters by prosecuting the reform element. Charles, in fact, sent a letter to that effect to the Diet, though it arrived too late. So the Diet left the matter of the Edict to the individual princes—the beginning of the famous, later legally established principle of *cuius regio, eius religio*—until a council could be convened to settle the religious controversies.

Three years of marvelous growth for the Lutherans (as they were now called) followed. By 1529, at the second Diet of Speier, the now thoroughly alarmed Roman majority of the estates voted to rescind the resolution of 1526 and to enforce the Edict of Worms; the Lutheran princes protested (hence the name Protestants) that a resolution adopted unanimously in 1526 could not legally be rescinded by a mere majority; but the protest sent to the Emperor was cast into the imperial wastebasket and the messengers carrying it into prison. The Emperor sacked Rome, dictated the terms of peace to France and the Pope, and prepared for the next Diet. The outlook was so dark that under the leadership of Philip of Hesse an attempt was made to unite the Lutherans and the Swiss reform party, the followers of Zwingli, who were now also threatened with war by a union of the Romanist cantons with the archenemy of Switzerland, Austria. But the Colloquy of Marburg failed in its purpose.

The danger to Protestantism was again averted by the westward progress of the Turk; the Emperor needed the support of the princes and cities who had adopted the "new faith" against the common enemy. This accounts for the friendly invitation extended to the Protestants to present their confession at the Diet of Augsburg, 1530 — an attitude that was changed, however, when the Emperor decreed (no doubt under the advice of the Papal Legate Campeggio, whom he met on the way to Augsburg): Six months of grace for the Lutherans; if they did not return to the "old church" by that time, force was to be used. But the Turk advanced too rapidly, and that decree was postponed until a council could decide.

It was evident what the intention of both ecclesiastical and secular authorities was: The Protestants must be brought back to the "old church," by persuasion, by pressure, if possible; by force, if necessary. This is corroborated by the correspondence of Charles V. To his brother he wrote, as early as 1529, that he meant to use every persuasion possible to make what compromises his conscience permitted, to effect a peaceful settlement; but if these failed, he was determined to crush the Reformation by force. The anti-Protestant edicts remained law; only the execution was delayed as circumstances made it necessary. From 1521 to 1546 Protestantism was illegal and existed only because the law could not be enforced. In addition, at the papal legate Campeggio's instigation, the Romanist princes of South Germany met in June, 1524, and formed the League of Regensburg; the princes of North Germany formed the League of Dessau in 1525, both Leagues in their constitutions making it their object to enforce the Edict of Worms, to eradicate Lutheranism. All of this was no secret; Protestants knew what was coming; hence the protective and defensive leagues of Torgau, 1526, and of Schmalkalden, 1531.

To the credit of Charles it should be emphasized that he aimed at a peaceful reunion of the church by mutual compromise of both parties; therefore his insistence throughout these years on a church council where all parties should meet and iron out their differences. To be sure, his object was largely political: A united church to prop up a united empire — an empire that was tottering and needed powerful support. A typical Hapsburg, he seems to have had no doubt that he would succeed. But by 1545 he became convinced

that all peaceful measures had failed and that the use of force was indicated. The Pope had finally called a council to meet in Trent; but by secret intrigues he had nullified the usefulness of the council for the purpose Charles had in mind; the program of the council published by the Pope made it impossible for Protestants to attend. Charles realized that all his endeavors to secure unity in church and empire by peaceable means had failed; it could only be accomplished by force. But it was impossible to use force unless the power of the Schmalkaldic League, which had by this time become an international organization, could be broken.

How this was done by a skillful, though not very creditable use of Philip of Hesse's bigamy and appeal to the selfish ambition of Maurice of Saxony; how the Schmalkaldic League was defeated; how the Emperor then tried to force his compromise confession, the Interim, on the Protestants of Germany and not only failed, but was so definitely defeated that in disgust he withdrew from Germany and, in a somewhat limited manner, left the management of German affairs and especially the settlement of the religious difficulties to his brother Ferdinand—all this has been sketched previously (CTM, loc. cit.). The German princes then gathered at Passau in August, 1552, to discuss the situation and to decide what was to be done. They wanted a permanent settlement of the religious question, not by a council—a council called by the Pope and directed by him would never do justice to the Protestants—nor by the Diet, because too many Roman ecclesiastics had a seat in the Diet—but at a meeting of princes fairly representative of both sides. To the latter stipulation the Emperor would not give his consent; he insisted that the Diet should decide; he still counted on divisions among the Protestants. But the Protestant princes finally consented. What they wanted was peace—*beständiger, beharrlicher, unbedingter, für und für ewig wäbrender Friede*, so they described it—a permanent peace. With this demand, then, they came before the Diet summoned to Augsburg for November 13, 1554, but not opened until February 5, 1555—old medieval custom, this! Also medieval precedent for this, that relatively few members attended the early sessions of the Diet; none of the Electors came; only two of the great ecclesiastical princes, one of them, the Cardinal Bishop of Augsburg, the only member of the

Diet who consistently protested against the demand for permanent peace. While the Diet dragged on aimlessly, all the Protestant princes met at Naumburg and there decided that they would stand firmly by the Augsburg Confession of 1530; and so prepared, they came to Augsburg.

The Lutheran demands were vehemently opposed by the Romanist members of the Diet. But they all, except the Cardinal Bishop of Augsburg, wanted peace. So, finally, the terms of the Religious Peace of Augsburg were drafted and adopted; the terms were these (Lindsay's account):

"It was agreed that the Lutheran religion should be legalized within the Empire, and that all Lutheran princes should have full security for the practice of their faith; that the medieval episcopal jurisdiction should cease within their lands; and that they were to retain all ecclesiastical possessions which had been secularized before the passing of the Treaty of Passau (1552). Future changes of faith were to be determined by the principle *cuius regio, eius religio* [though this term was not used in the Peace]. The secular territorial ruler might choose between the Romanist or the Lutheran faith, and his decision was to bind all his subjects. If a subject professed another religion from his prince, he was to be allowed to emigrate without molestation. These provisions were agreed upon by all and embodied in the recess. Two very important matters remained unsettled. The Romanists demanded that any ecclesiastical prince who changed his faith should thereby forfeit lands and dignities — the ecclesiastical reservation! This was embodied in the 'recess,' but the Protestants declared that they would not be bound by it. On the other hand, the Protestants demanded toleration for all Lutherans living within the territories of Romanist princes. This was not embodied in the 'recess,' though Ferdinand promised that he would see it carried out in practice. Such was the famous Peace of Augsburg."

It was a compromise; that is generally stated, and deplored by some. Was it wrong? It was not a religious, a confessional compromise, but political. The question before the Diet of Augsburg was not primarily unity of church and religion. Of course, all wanted unity; but by this time everybody also knew that Rome would allow only *their* brand of unity. There were certain things

that Protestants *could* not sacrifice, and certain things that Rome *would* not concede. That was evident before the Diet convened. The question before the Diet, therefore, was not how to establish unity of confession, to unite the two factions; they were beyond that. Grimm rightly says: "The destruction of medieval Christian unity during the first half of the sixteenth century was recognized by the Peace of Augsburg. . . . But one cannot lay the blame for this loss upon the princes at Augsburg, for the break had become so complete by 1555 that it is difficult to conceive of any force strong enough to restore unity." The question before the Diet was one of subsistence, of continued existence; should they continue to slaughter one another? Their object was not to influence any man's convictions. Brandi speaks of "dem unverkennbaren Willen der Beteiligten, fortan miteinander in Frieden zu leben. Aber freilich dieser Wille war ein erzwungener, zustandegekommen durch beiderseitige Ermüdung". And Droysen: "Nicht nur um einen 'Religionsfrieden' handelte es sich, sondern . . . um eine Gestaltung Deutschlands, welche es den Ständen alter und neuer Konfession . . . möglich machte, miteinander weiter zu existieren." It was a political agreement "to live and let live." Lortz cites the text of the pact stating the purpose of the agreement: "Der Religionsfriede wurde vereinbart, um die im Reich durch die 'spaltige Religion' entstandene 'nachdenkliche Unsicherheit aufzuheben, der Stände und Untertanen Gemüter wiederum in Ruhe und Vertrauen gegeneinander zu stellen, die Teutsch Nation, unser geliebt Vaterland vor endlicher Zertrennung und bevorstehendem Untergang zu verhüten'. . . . So erreichten die Augsburger Konfessionsverwandten und die Katholiken was zu diesen Zeiten möglich war: einen Kompromiss." It was the best thing the princes could do; it was right to do it.

One result of Augsburg, which especially German writers deplore, is this: It put the finishing touch to a definite change in the Empire; national unity was a thing of the past, even in theory; the Holy Roman Empire had become a loose federation of territorial princes. Droysen, e. g., says: "Aller Vorteil fiel den Ständen zu. Die Summe der Neuordnung von 1555 bedeutet den vollen Sieg der reichsfürstlichen Aristokratie. . . . Sie triumphierte über das nationale wie über das monarchische Interesse. Das Reich als

solches war vernichtet, aus einem kaiserlichen Reich deutscher Nation war es ein ständisches Gemeinwesen deutscher Nation geworden, eine 'Republik' mit dem Namen des Königs oder Kaisers an der Spitze." As far as the control of religion was concerned, the *cuius regio, eius religio* was an evil thing; one is tempted to say with Lortz: "Ein heidnischer Grundsatz war anerkannt. Es konnte nichts anderes das Ergebnis sein, als dass er das Christentum gewaltig belastete." "The peace," says Lucas, "in subjecting religion to state control, created the idea of state-established religion which was to remain practically unquestioned until the outbreak of the French Revolution." However, Grimm points out: "In most respects the Peace of Augsburg merely recognized a *fait accompli* in the Empire, namely, the emergence of territorialism." The beginning and large development of this antedates by far the Peace of Augsburg. Lortz rightly calls it "*die Besiegelung* der deutschen politischen Zerstückelung." But Lortz, despite his enormous admissions justifying the Reformation, remains a good son of the Church! He says: "Am Ende der Regierung Karls V ist der Territorialismus zum Sieg über das Reich gekommen. Aber es ist unzutreffend, zu sagen, dass dies durch Karl geschehen sei. Es geschah vielmehr vorherrschend durch jene Kraft, die das schon im Aufstieg begriffene Territorialfürstentum wesentlich in sich selbständig machte . . . durch Luthers Reformation. . . . In diesem Sinne ist Luther, im Gegensatz zu der von ihm geweckten nationalen Energie, durch den Ablauf der von ihm inaugurierten Situationen Zerstörer der deutschen Reichs-Nation geworden." Lortz is, however, honest enough to add: "Es geschah aber *nicht nur* durch sie [die Reformation]."

Lindsay, on the contrary, and rightly, makes Charles V directly responsible for the loss of German national unity. "There was no reason why it (the Peace) should not have come years earlier and without the wild war-storm which preceded it, save the fact that, in an unfortunate fit of enthusiasm, the Germans had elected the young King of Spain to be their Emperor. They had chosen the grandson of the genial Maximilian, believing him to be a real German, and they got a man whose attitude to religion 'was half-way between the genial orthodoxy of his grandfather Maximilian and the gloomy fanaticism of his son Philip II' and whose 'mind was

always traveling away from the former and towards the latter position' (Pollard). The longer he lived, the more Spanish he became, and the less capable of understanding Germany, either on its secular or religious side. His whole public life, so far as that country was concerned, was one disastrous failure. He succeeded only when he used his imperial position to increase and consolidate the territorial possessions of the House of Hapsburg; for the charge of dismembering the Empire can be brought home to Charles as effectually as to the most selfish of the princes of Germany." He points out that the Peace of Augsburg was contained in the decisions of Speier in 1526 and repeated in every one of the truces which the Emperor made with his Lutheran subjects from 1530 to 1544. "Had any one of these been made permanent, the religious war, with its outcome in wild anarchy, in embittered religious antagonism, and its seed of internecine strife, to be reaped in the Thirty Years' War, would never have occurred. But Charles, whose mission, he fancied, was to preserve the unity 'of the seamless robe of Christ,' as he phrased it, could only make the attempt by drenching the fields of Germany with blood, and perpetuating and accentuating the religious antagonisms of the country which had chosen him for its Protector."

It should not be overlooked that, without this developing territorialism, humanly speaking, there would have been no Reformation. Mackinnon notes: "It must be remembered that without their [the Protestant princes'] support the Reformation could hardly have succeeded in maintaining itself against the Catholic opposition and the reactionary policy of Charles V. . . . Would there have been any Reformation at all without their alliance? The fate of Hus would seem to decide this question. . . . Even Luther would have been crushed had there been no Elector to hide him in the Wartburg and no League of Schmalkald to intervene between him and the Emperor. As it was, the final treaty saved the work which Luther had achieved in co-operation with his princely patrons."

Above all, the Religious Peace of Augsburg marks the first step toward religious toleration and liberty. This is acknowledged by all, though deplored by some. Bainton, in his characteristic way, says: "Those who deplore any breach in unity as scandal and sin will bemoan the outcome. Those who prize liberty above univer-

sality will see here one step in the direction of freedom in religion." It should suffice to cite Lindsay's fine summary of the outcome: "This Religious Peace of Augsburg has been claimed, and rightly, as a victory for religious liberty. From one point of view the victory was not a great one. The only Confession tolerated was the Augsburg. The Swiss Reformation and its adherents were outside the scope of the religious peace. What grew to be the Reformed or Calvinistic Church was also outside. It was limited solely to the Lutheran, or, as it was called, the evangelical creed. Nor was there much gain to the personal liberty of conscience. It may be said with truth that there was less freedom of conscience under the Lutheran territorial system of churches, and also under the Roman Catholic Church reorganized under the canons and decrees of Trent, than there had been in the medieval Church. The victory lay in this, that the first blow had been struck to free mankind from the fetters of Romanist absolutism; that the first faltering step had been taken on the road to religious liberty; and the first is valuable not for what it is in itself, but for what it represents and for what comes after it. The Religious Peace of Augsburg did not concede much according to modern standards; but it contained the potency and promise of the future. It is always the first step which counts."

A word as to the exceptions made in the Peace. The Swiss Reformation and Calvinism "were outside the scope of religious peace." It is inexact to say: "They were excluded"; they simply were not included. We can surmise reasons for this. The Reformation of Zwingli was a Swiss, not a German movement, represented only in the south of Germany near the Swiss border. Moreover, the South German cities had joined the Lutherans in the Wittenberg Concord. As to Calvinism, Lindsay uses a significant expression: "What grew to be the Reformed or Calvinistic Church." There was at this time (1555) very little Calvinism in Germany (see the map of Catholicism, Lutheranism, and Calvinism in Grimm, *The Reformation Era*, p. 481). The extensive spread of Calvinism in Germany came later. For some of the things that happened later in the relationship between Lutherans and Calvinists all that should be said here is: Even Lutherans sometimes make mistakes! But that has nothing to do with the Religious Peace of Augsburg. In 1555, in Germany, Calvinism simply did not come into consideration.

As for the Anabaptists and related radicals, their treatment and very common persecution, an explanation (not an excuse) may be offered. The bulk of Anabaptists were quiet, inoffensive people; but they had too many loud-mouthed leaders who brought the whole sect into disrepute. They usually were Chiliasts who expected the immediate return of the Lord to establish His thousand-year kingdom on earth; and their divine obligation was to prepare a center for that millennium. That brought them into conflict with the secular governments. Think of the extravagances of Zwickau, Münster, Mühlhausen; the plots of Thomas Münzer, etc. The result was that in many quarters the sect was suspected of anarchism. In that time of general unrest and dissatisfaction, when government officials often felt that they were sitting on a powder keg, this suspicion was enough to make Anabaptists unwelcome and often led to persecution. An explanation, not an excuse!

The great result of the Peace of Augsburg was just that. It brought peace to Germany; sixty years of peace, while in the neighboring countries war raged and devastated land and people, e. g., in the Netherlands, in France. In its course the Peace brought other blessings: "It meant the overthrow of the papal power, of the medieval ecclesiastical domination over soul and conscience, as far as Lutheran Germany was concerned. It ensured for the persecuted Protestant, if not religious toleration in the modern sense, at least the possibility of escaping persecution by removing from the jurisdiction of a Roman Catholic prince to that of a Protestant one. It was thus an advance on the medieval alternative of absolute submission to a universal ecclesiastical authority, despotically exercised, or death for refusal. This alternative could be evaded by at least Luther's followers in the Catholic States, and this represented no small advance on the medieval spirit" (Mackinnon).

Yes, it was only a temporary peace; sixty-three years later it was broken by the Thirty Years' War. But that was not the fault of the Religious Peace of Augsburg! Parts of the peace treaty, especially omissions, are generally cited as furnishing an opening for renewed warfare, and rightly so; but does anyone in these war-torn times claim that any peace treaty can be formed that does not leave a loophole for renewed war? That war was renewed

was not the fault of the Augsburg Treaty, but of the Counter-reformation. Militant Romanism, with Jesuits as leaders, or rather as drivers, broke the treaty and renewed the war. But that again is another chapter.

Lutherans of 1555 hailed the Religious Peace of Augsburg as a great blessing and thanked God for it. And so should we!

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St. Louis, Mo.

# The Christian Hope and Our Fellow Man

By MARTIN FRANZMANN

(Concluded)

## II. THE NEW DETACHMENT

John the Baptist at the dawning of the new age, the coming of the Kingdom, called men away from ties of home, nation, Temple, and cultus into the desert, to meet there the God who was with Israel before Israel had a home, a national life, a Temple, and a cultus. The repentance which he preached was a great act of detachment. Likewise Jesus detached His disciples from the traditional standards of clean and unclean, pointed to Himself as greater than the Temple, and promised to build His ἐκκλησία, His people of God, as inheritor of Israel's promise but detached from Israel's standards and Israel's fate. And Jesus put the world's first, daily bread, into fourth place in the prayer which He taught us to pray. Even the hallowed ties of family could not bind if they held a man from Jesus. So radical was the detachment He demanded and gave. (Luke 14:25-35.)

St. Paul speaks of himself as crucified to the world (Gal. 6:14) and of his converts as children of the day in the midst of a world that is still in the night (1 Thess. 5:4 ff.). There runs through the whole New Testament this note of detachment and with it a vast and joyous sigh of relief at having gotten rid of a whole crew of mad and furious masters.

And so it is in James: the word of truth which brought us forth and made us God's men in God's motion has set us free from lies and delusions, has detached us from the compulsion of the standards, values, ties, bonds, and involvements of this world, this aeon. And that with no philosophically passive and anemic detachment but with a joyous, resilient, full-blooded vigor, such as speaks in the vigorous and athletic accent of the admonitions of James.

Let us examine this detachment of hope a little more in detail; for it bears directly on the subject that has brought us together here, that of human relations. The bearing is, in fact, for the most

part so obvious that I shall not particularly underscore it but leave it to you to draw the line from the New Testament to your own situation yourselves.

"Count it all joy, my brethren, when you meet various trials" (1:2 RSV). Here is a complete inversion of values. We have been set free from *eudaemonism*, from the illusion that man's noblest and most indispensable work is the pursuit of happiness, the illusion that we are somehow entitled to happiness, that we have a right to it. We know of no rights that we can lay claim to at all, least of all a right to happiness; we, the people born of God, know only of *gifts*, and they are all gifts of the Giver-God, who gives absolutely and without reproaching the recipient, gifts of the Father of Lights, who is greater and more constant in His goodness than the lights which He has created and is capable of giving greater things than happiness; from glory to glory advancing, we receive His gifts, and we know that they are good gifts. Whether they square up to some standard of "happiness" constructed by men of this poor dying world or not, that is a largely irrelevant question. "Prosperity is the blessing of the Old Testament, adversity that of the New and carrieth the greater benediction" (Bacon).

We have therewith been removed from that prolific mother of strife (4:1 ff.), that teeming womb of wars, the angry distinction between have and have-not; standards of living and *Lebensraum* have ceased to loom up as *the* questions in our lives. The word of truth has freed us from what our Lord Himself has called the "deceit of wealth" (Matt. 13:22). The poor man is rich in faith, inheritor of the Kingdom promised to those that love God (2:5), and exults in his exaltation (1:9), while the rich man is lifted above his wealth, not merely to the level of indifference but to the point where he exults in his "humiliation" (1:10), in the fact that all his greatness is no longer great in his own eyes; he has become a Diasporite over against his own wealth, and he boasts his superiority to the transience of the things of this world, to the death-bound sweep of all things that make for economic greatness.

We have been freed, too, of secularism, from that gray and flat pattern of thought in which this world is both background and foreground, beginning and end. Since the Lord of Glory entered

into time, all time has become God's time, and we cannot dispose of our years and days as if they were ours and not God's—the *condicio Jacobea*, "If the Lord wills," lies over all our planning (4:14, 15). "God-less" planning has become impossible for us; and so has "God-less" speech. That is why we cannot swear; to swear would be to indicate that *for once* the God of Truth is to be exceptionally present to lend sanction to our worldly, that is, our normally God-less and lying, words (5:12). Since He has begotten us again with His word of truth, all words are freighted with eternity, all words are spoken in His presence, all words are oaths.

Since that word of truth has been spoken, this *saeculum*, this world, need not dominate us any more; it is possible to keep oneself unspotted from the God-forsaking world (1:27). It is possible to hear God's voice above the voice of self and world, to hear the new victorious theme amid the dissonances in the cosmic symphony (1:21). Our tongues need be no longer the incarnation of the unrighteous world (3:6), of the adulterous world (4:4); they need no longer be divided between cursing and blessing (3:10).

This spells release from the imprisonment in the present, too, from the obedience to the demands of here and now. The present is no longer barren, to be filled somehow, anyhow; it is a waiting for the harvest (5:7). We must wait, but know before whose doors we wait, why we wait, and what we are waiting for. The wall that separates the present from the future has become translucent. Nor is it so thick a wall that we cannot hear the voice of God beyond it. We have a message (5:10) and a vision which make for patient endurance, for that stamina of the fighter who is certain of his victory, who fights upon a field which God has already marked victoriously as His own.

We are free, too, from the pressure of prestige, our own or others'; we have become, like Paul, capable of counting it dung (Phil. 3:8). Our Lord Jesus, the Lord of Glory, has drawn a fat, black, and never-to-be-erased line between us, His Diaspora, and the shoving, shouldering, and scrambling world: "It is not so among you" (Matt. 20:26); for the Son of Man came to minister and to give His life a ransom for many. The way of glory is the

downward way of ministry and self-giving. We receive the Word in meekness, in that confident dependence upon God which credits Him with the ability to read His own calendar and the will to set wrong right in His time and in His way without the self-assertion of our loud and angry mouths (1:21, 26). Wisdom does its work of mercy in meekness (3:13), wisdom is ἐπεικής — the largeness of its hope makes it large and noble of heart, a princely virtue (3:17). We see men, rich and poor, black, yellow, and white, with God's eyes, not with the eyes of self; fawning on the great and contempt for the shabby and honorless both melt away before the rising sun of the Christian hope (2:1-13). Our boasting ceases; the chest-thumping master of his fate and captain of his soul is heard no more (4:16) — for greatness lies in hope, in submittal wholly and willingly to Him who will exalt us all (4:7-10).

We are, moreover, detached from a by-form of prestige and self-assertion which takes devious and blasphemous ways: self-asserting man cannot and will not face the fact of his own sin, at least not in the specifically uncomfortable form of accountable sin, of guilt. He blinks his guilt by a flight into naturalism or boldly throws it upon God, in fatalism. All that is now past for us; from fatalism and naturalism we are delivered by the Word of Truth, which is our Word of Hope; the Just One bore our guilt (5:6), and in the light of the Cross we can see our sin as our own. We know now, unmistakably and unalterably, that God tempts no man to sin (1:13 ff.); we cannot deceive ourselves when confronted by Him who brought us forth as the first fruits of His creatures. The Father of Lights has made us cease to hate the light which shows us our guilt (cf. John 3:20).

This being in God's motion, which is the essence of the New Testament hope, frees us also from delusive religiosity, from the aberrations of an ingrown piety which believes it can contemplate the arabesques of God's whipping garments as He presses on toward His goal for us as if they were a pattern designed to relieve the plainness of the walls of our sequestered, contemplatory cells, a piety which believes, in other words, that it can hear God's Word without doing it, can receive mercy without showing mercy (1:27; 2:1-13). Hope releases us from the fallacy of verbal veneration;

we who have felt and feel the creative breath of God, the impulsive afflatus of His Spirit, can never again think of Him as a sort of personified First Cause, content to be contemplated.

A hope which knows God as the sole Author of our new Diaspora-being (1:18), as the perpetual and perfect Giver who will finish the good work which He has begun in us, is proof against the charms of moralism also. It cannot think of God's will as fractional or fractionable—His Law is one unbreakable whole, wholly kept or wholly broken (2:9). There can be no thought, for hopers in God, of building ladders part way up to Him by fractional obedience to His Law; especially when hope fulfilled knows that He has already come all the way down to us in the crucified Lord of Glory (2:1; 5:6) and has planted His Spirit in us (4:5), so that His will becomes for us the law of liberty, written in the hearts of sons, the royal law, freely kept by men who are by God's appointment kings (2:5).

All these are but concrete manifestations of the ultimate detachment which lies behind them all—the detachment from the domination of the devil (Col. 1:13). Hope knows that the devil is judged and bound, defeated. Our wisdom need no longer be the wisdom of envy and self-seeking, a devilish wisdom; there is a meek, pure, wisdom which comes to us from above (3:13-18). The tongue need no longer be incandescent with the fires of Gehenna, although no man can tame it (3:8). It has been tamed by the Great Overcomer. Satan has been defeated, and our every resistance to him is the renewed incarnation of this prime defeat. And so James can speak in the succinct and tonic tones of confidence when he tells us: "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (4:7). It is as simple as that: *Ein Wörtlein kann ihn fällen!*

We are freed, in short, by hope from that secular arithmetic which mistakes fractions for whole numbers and is built up on the assumption that a fraction of our life is the whole number of our life. We who receive with meekness the Word of God know that our life is a whole number divided into two fractions. We know that the small fraction is critically important and that the character of the whole number depends on what manner of fraction this small fraction is; but we know that it is only a fraction. Hope sets the present at its proper value.

## III. THE NEW INVOLVEMENT

We know that this little fraction of our life is of critical importance for the whole; that should guard against any misconception of our detachment; it is no monastic flight from the world, no merely philosophic resignation, nor the inverted hedonism of a Lucretius—*Suave mari magno*. It is a happy, safe, courageous, and resolute recognition of the full dimensions of God's great last act. We are free, detached from the compulsions of this world, in order that we may see what we are and where we are. And both what we are and where we are signifies a new and unheard-of involvement.

What are we? We are God's twelve tribes, His children by a new redemptive birth. Where are we? We are God's Diaspora, His people in an alien world, a world still in rebellion against Him, still in the power of the Evil One (1 John 5:19). God's great act of liberation is at the same time His act of laying claim upon us, His confiscation in royal magnanimity of us His new creatures. Therefore James 1:18, the great indicative of redemption, is followed by 1:19, the great imperative: "Know it, my beloved brethren." To *know* God (and we know Him by what He does) is to acknowledge Him as God, to let Him be God in everything; to know Him in hope is to assert here and now the new world where God is all and all. To be *His* twelve tribes in the Dispersion means being (in every area of our lives) the embodiment and the pledge of His triumph over all that clouds His name and opposes His will, is to be His dissenting opinion to the course of this world, His interim proclamation of what has been in the resurrection of Christ and what shall be at His coming, it means being "blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world" (Phil. 2:15). Our feckless and misdirected lives come under the Lordship of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory, and from Him receive purpose and direction, so that knowing means *hearing*, and hearing means doing, and doing is worship—the God we know is the God who has acted for us, is acting, and will act; to worship Him in Spirit and in truth is to worship Him in act (1:26, 27).

The God to whose motion we are committed, in whom we hope as His dispersed tribes, is the God who has acted with a round and whole, a perfect and exceptionless love, without respect of persons; His glory, the glory of His grace, has tabernacled among us; His Son, the Effulgence of His glory, made purification for our sins. Faith in Him means a life communion with Him, a communion which can tolerate no respect of persons, no false distinctions between man and man, whatever their alleged basis. Hope, committal to God's new world, involves us here and now, commits us here and now, to God's view of the poor and outcast, the honorless and the submerged, compels us to see men with God's eyes and to deal with men, all men, with God's mercy. It is no accident that James 2:1-13, the section which deals with "respect of persons," rings with the great keywords of the Christian proclamation—James is pointing us to where we are and to what we are: election, inheritance, kingdom of God, promise, mercy, and Judgment. Yes, Judgment; for the God who justifies remains, for James as for Paul, God the Judge. Only mercy, God's mercy, will save us at that Judgment; but whether or not we have committed ourselves to that mercy will be seen concretely in the fact that we have or have not been merciful to our brother man; whether our hope in, and our confession to, that mercy has been dominated and active in our whole life.

For the God of mercy who of His own will brought us forth to be the first fruits of His new creation is not mocked (Gal. 6:7); He yearns *jealously* over the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us (James 4:5). That gift of the Spirit involves us inexorably, for the Spirit is God's good Spirit, the creative and moving force of God's new world, the impulse and the dynamic of the New Jerusalem, now at work in the Diaspora. To receive the Spirit is to live the life of the new world, in hope, in the Diaspora. To continue to live the old life of this world, of the κόσμος, is enmity against God, is adulterous desertion of Him (4:4); that is the way of self, of one's own "lust" (what St. Paul calls sowing in the field of the flesh), the way which goes with the inevitability of conception, gestation, and birth to death (1:15). What such a Nay to God's new life and new world, such a non-involvement with the Giver-God, means is shown with terrible

clarity in James' denunciation of the rich (5:1-6). Here are men who have decided to take the cash and let the credit go, nor heed the rolling of the distant drum. They have said Nay to the Spirit of God and Yea to garments, silver, and gold. They have gathered treasures—by trampling on men's heads and by condemning the just—in *the last days* (5:3), heedless of what hour has struck; they have fattened their hearts—on the day of slaughter, the Day of Judgment, that dreadful Day (5:5). The fools! They have settled for a pleasant picnic in the shade and have not eyes to see that the shade is the growing shadow cast by the Stone cut without hands (Daniel 2), already arolling to come down and grind to powder all the greatness of the great in this unrighteous world. That is what it means to say Nay to God's new world; it means destruction, judgment without mercy (2:13). And it does not matter who it is that speaks the Nay, and the size and loudness of the Nay makes no difference either. God's new world is the new, the ultimate, the solely valid reality and involves all men, in grace and judgment, and it involves the whole man.

That is why James is so concerned about our words, our Christian words, our Christian talk. "Be quick to hear and slow to speak" (1:19). Do not crowd into the teaching office, "for you know that we who teach shall be judged with greater strictness" (3:1, RSV); we shall all stand before the judgment throne of Christ, even the teachers, just the teachers. James knows from Jesus' words how even the idle word can harden into an adamantine indictment against us (Matt. 12:36). With words, those easy words, we vault into God's judgment throne, to judge our brother, to judge God's Law, which bids us love our brother—"There is one Lawgiver and Judge who can save *and can destroy*. Who are you to judge your neighbor?" (4:12.) Even grumbling against one another, that pleasant family and ecclesiastical sport, loses its innocent neutrality: "Grumble not, brethren, against one another, *that you be not judged*. Behold, the Judge stands at the door" (5:9). The last word is not ours to speak but His. With the shadow of the Judge already falling across our threshold, our Yea and our Nay are oaths enough (5:12). To say more would be to deny the new world, the coming world, where God is normal

in men's lives and not the exception. Nonswearing is the Diaspora's oath of fealty to the great King of the New Jerusalem.

Our Diaspora-lives are therefore lives of holy fear and of mournful penitence; James' cry: "Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you men of double soul" (4:8), is ever in our ears. "Be afflicted and mourn and weep." But it is no craven, paralyzing fear, and it is no fruitless penitence. The jealous God is at the same time the God who gives the greater grace for the greater need (4:6) to the humble; the God who draws near to us when we in repentance turn to Him (4:8), the God who will exalt those who look to Him for their exaltation (4:10).

This life of repentance is a life of faith (2:14-26). Faith is life-communion with the working God and is (here faith and hope overlap) total committal to His consummation. Therefore faith has works; *it acts on God's future*. The works of Abraham and Rahab are called works of faith; they could with equal appropriateness be called acts of hope: Abraham, detached from the ties of blood by the impulse of his hope, offered up his son in the sure hope that God's promise would not fail, that He is greater than His greatest gift; Rahab, detached from civic ties by the impulse of her hope, acted in the hope, the confidence of faith looking forward, that God would bring to pass what He had promised: "I know that the Lord hath given you the land . . . the Lord, your God, He is God in heaven above and in earth beneath" (Joshua 2:9, 11). Their faith is in extreme contrast to the faith of demons; the demons know of God's new world, too: "Art Thou come to destroy us before the time?" (Matt. 8:29); but it is a knowledge without hope, without assent, without involvement. Their faith has no hope and therefore has no works. They see the line drawn through history by God's chariot wheels, but they know that they shall never follow in His train. They shudder and cower, for they know that they shall be downriden by the chariots of God. When they cry, "We know Thee who Thou art, the Holy One of God," they have a creed, but they are using it magically, as a means of warding off the Holy One of God. It is a thought to make one pause; a creed recited without the involvement of living hope can become a magical, apotropaic formula. We can use creeds to get rid of God, to

confess Him and have done with Him. — But we are God's twelve tribes in the Dispersion and have the signature of His hope upon us; our creeds cannot become apotropaic formulas; our creeds are confessions to the great act of the living God, done, adoring, and to be done; and so our creeds become deeds, deeds as natural as breathing and as inevitable.

All this is, perhaps, disappointingly general; but it has to be general if we are going to let the New Testament speak to us on the subject of human relations, speak to us, that is, not as *an* authority but as *the* authority. If we are willing to do that, there are two points that emerge with great clarity.

The one is this: For us as Diasporites, as members of the twelve tribes in the Dispersion, *heredity (our birth from God) is everything and environment nothing*. For us, every accepted value of this world is under perpetual and ever-renewed question. The philosophic presuppositions and axioms of any age are under question. We are forced, as men of hope, to put our questions always *in conspectu Dei*, that is, in the sight of the God in motion, the God who has drawn near in grace and mercy, the God drawing nigh to consummate in judgment and renewal what He has begun. In His presence nothing that is of this age is per se a given, acceptable magnitude: the Western tradition, the American way of life, standards of living, human rights, the self-evident truths of this age or any age, everything that lives from man to man — we are Diasporites over against them all. The church and the Christian who have lost their power to question their environment have ceased to be Christian and church. Our study, endeavors, and work in the field of human relations must, in other words, be specifically and peculiarly, New Testamentally Christian if we are to justify their existence.

The second point is a corollary of the first: *If our endeavors in this or any field are to be specifically Christian, they must be eschatological*; that is, they must be done in the tension of expectancy. For only so can we really be guided by the New Testament. The New Testament is, as a codebook of ethics, a great disappointment; it is sparse in making distinctions and lacking in detail; it offers no cleanly and clearly articulated program, appears almost desultory in its selection of examples — for example, it legislates

no rites, sets no times or seasons, prescribes no organization, offers only the most general hints on Christian education. It is something far better and greater: It is an inspired book; that is, the Spirit of God, the Beginning and the Guarantee of the New World of God, is at work in it and through it, as He was its Author; the New Testament translates us, if we will not resist it, into a new situation and therefore has a certain high nonchalance about the spiritually obvious. After all, you needn't tell a mountain climber not to take along a small anvil (handy for cracking nuts along the way) or a skier in mid-career not to look back to take snapshots of where he has been, or a swimmer not to wear long underwear, or a berrypicker not to wear boxing gloves. The detachment and involvement given with our hope "legislate" with the force of the obvious and imminent fact. And so we must also ask ourselves: Dare we consider any phase of Christian life and action noneschatologically, without finding its place in God's last chapter, that chapter which began with the Incarnation and shall end in glory with the return of our Lord? Maranatha!

St. Louis, Mo.

# Let Jeremiah Speak Today!

By ALFRED VON ROHR SAUER

IT is regrettable that a prophet of the stature of Jeremiah who has so much to say to our generation is virtually unknown among our people and not too familiar among our pastors. Here was a man who, as his name indicates, was "hurled into the life of his nation" (Baughman), in much the same way as Christians today are brought face to face with the problems of their country and community. This was a man who was "born to be at odds with and in opposition to the whole world" (Welch), just as the modern disciple of Christ finds himself in conflict with the world.

Many a minister today thinks of his preaching in terms of the statement that has been made of Jeremiah that "no prophet was ever more sure of his word, or less sure of himself" (G. A. Smith). The modern pastor will surely be drawn to Jeremiah when it is pointed out to him that "Isaiah exceeded Jeremiah in all those qualities which pertain distinctly to the *intellectual* side of the prophetic movement; but as an exponent of the purely *spiritual* side of this movement Jeremiah stands without a peer" (Buddenwieser). Neither layman nor pastor can afford to ignore a personality who has been called "one of the greatest, if not the greatest, of the Hebrew prophets" (Bright).

For this reason the recent appearance of *Bible Commentary: Jeremiah* by Theo. Laetsch, D.D., Concordia Publishing House, 1952, should be welcomed by the serious student of the Bible. It is to be hoped that this volume, to which this article is designed to call attention, will help to stimulate interest in the prophet Jeremiah in all areas of the life of the church.

According to Laetsch's analysis the fourth year of the reign of King Jehoiakim (605 B.C.) is a pivotal point in the Book of Jeremiah. This was the year in which Jeremiah was commanded by God to put into writing the revelations which he had received. It was also the year in which King Nebuchadnezzar defeated Pharaoh Necho in the great Battle of Carchemish. On the basis of references to this year in chs. 25:1; 36:1; 45:1 Laetsch finds three major divisions in Jeremiah 1—45: Jeremiah's faithfulness amidst personal conflict (chs. 2—25); the prophet's faithfulness despite pressure from without (chs. 26—36); Jeremiah's message of utter doom for Jerusalem (chs. 37—45). This division follows the chapter sequence as it has come down to us.

Another recent volume on Jeremiah by Elmer A. Leslie (Abingdon, 1954) follows a radically different approach. In an effort to let the reader understand every phase of the prophet's activity, Leslie attempts to re-arrange the contents of the book chronologically and interweaves his own interpretation with the words of the prophet. Some aspects of Leslie's book are quite commendable, but his division of the contents is confusing.

On the basis of literary types the contents of Jeremiah's book may also be divided into (1) Poetry, (2) Biography, (3) Prose, as John Bright has done in a recent article on Jeremiah (*Interpretation*, July 1955, pp. 265 ff.). According to Bright, the prophet himself had no hand in organizing the material in *Gattungen*; that was done by a collector who put the subject matter together on the basis of such criteria as common theme and common occasion. Evidence of various editorial additions is found in Jer. 36:32, "And there were added besides unto them many like words."

Be that as it may, it is the opinion of the present reviewer that Jeremiah's message for the church of today can best be presented on the basis of the prophet's fourfold activity as a *warner*, a *confessor*, a *sufferer*, and a *comforter*. If Jeremiah is to speak to our generation, then it must be shown that what he warned against in his day still needs to be warned against today, that the inner conflicts which he experienced are still being experienced today, that because we still suffer as he suffered, therefore we still need the comfort which he had to offer.

#### JEREMIAH, THE WARNER

From the time of his call it was made clear to Jeremiah that he was to be a warner of his people: the Lord appointed him to tear out and to pull down, to ruin and to destroy (1:10). Like a modern wrecking crew he was to break down all of the achievements of man, so that the will and way of God might prevail. His life's work, as Laetsch observes, was described in two words: "Stand! Speak!" (1:17.) He was never to soften the tone of his warning or make it less effective because of pressure from men.

The attitude of the people that he was to warn against was one which the modern pastor confronts every day: desertion and defection from the way of God. The Israelites had so many different ways of turning their back to the Lord that the prophet needed to be warning them about it constantly. And he used appropriate pictures. Israel exchanged her glorious God Jehovah for an *Ersatzgott* (2:11). She forsook this Fountain of living waters and dug broken and filthy cisterns (2:13).

The noble vine which God planted degenerated into a strange vine (2:21). She was like a "dromedary in heart" who in insatiable sexual appetite went from one partner to another (2:23; cf. 5:4).

The Lord had no trouble restraining the sea with a wall of sand, but He found that His people's fickle hearts were unrestrainable (5:23). Israel was to be as close to Jehovah as the girdle was to Jeremiah's loins; but as the prophesier's girdle became unfit for wear when he left it in the river, so Israel became unfit for the Lord through her apostasy (13:11). She was so used to doing evil that to change for the better would be as hard for her as changing an Ethiopian's skin or a leopard's spots (13:23). Judah's estrangement from God was so deep-seated that it was engraved upon the table of her heart with an iron stylus and with the point of a diamond (17:1). The degenerate people under Zedekiah were comparable to a basket of very bad figs, standing in front of the Temple, which could not be eaten (24:2).

Judah's desertion from the Lord was epitomized in the attitude of King Jehoiakim, who showed his defiant attitude by cutting up and burning the precious manuscript on which Jeremiah had recorded his revelations from God (36:23). That this insolent attitude was very odious to the Lord is indicated by the fact that the prophet was forbidden three times even to pray for his people (7:16; 11:14; 14:11).

What made Israel's defection so much worse was the fact that the people went through the motions of religious worship and thought they were pleasing the Lord. In his famous Temple address Jeremiah pointed out to the people that the Temple and the sacrifices that were being brought in it had become stumbling blocks to them (7:14, 22). Because they had converted the Temple into a den of robbers (7:11) and regarded sacrifices as indulgences that would take away sin (11:15), therefore God would do away with Temple and sacrifice until the offense was removed (7:14).

The only route whereby Israel could come back to God was that of repentance (3:22). Any other approach was false and deceitful (3:10). Any other overture would prevent the Lord from treating Israel as His own son (3:19, 20). Israel needed to break up its hardened spiritual ground and to cut deeply into the fattened recesses of its heart (4:3, 4). It needed to forsake the heights of Baal and to cease its spiritual wandering and to turn to Jehovah in genuine repentance (3:23).

When Jeremiah beheld this strange phenomenon that a fallen people did not get up, that an erring people did not amend (8:4), when he

noted how even the scribes who recorded the Sacred Record perverted the texts (8:8), he was tempted to run off to the wilderness (9:2). "He might have become the patron saint of monasticism" (Laetsch) had he done what he wanted to do. But the Lord needed him as His warner. Instead of running to the wilderness, he was to tell his people to run through the streets of Jerusalem and see if they could find one faithful person there (5:1). Instead of shunning society, he was to seek out people.

As the gleaner searches for grapes that have been overlooked, so the prophet was to carefully glean the remnant of Israel (6:9). He was to serve as an assayer, or tester, who would find out the true character of his countrymen (6:27); he was to listen in on their conversations and find out whether there was any evidence of repentance in them (8:6). As the potter made a new vessel out of the one that was spoiled, so Jeremiah was to tell his people that there was still hope that the Lord would make a new people out of them if they repented (18:3-6), that the way of man is not in himself (10:23), that his glory should not be in wisdom, power, or wealth, but rather in the knowledge of a gracious, just and righteous God (9:23,24).

The above examples will suffice to show the pastor of today how much relevant material he can find in Jeremiah which he may use as a warner in his parish. He will recognize the need of such warnings because the tendency to forsake God is just as strong today as it was then. He will welcome the prophet's words of warning as guidelines for the preaching and counseling program in his own parish. For himself he will also be interested in some of the personal problems of this great preacher of old. These become evident when we look at

### JEREMIAH, THE CONFESSOR

More than any other prophet, Jeremiah gives us a glimpse of some of the grave spiritual conflicts that raged within him during his turbulent ministry. In his confessions we find evidence of the same inhibitions, weaknesses, and temptations that beset us in our work today. Occasionally he is so overcome by his difficult burdens and responsibilities that he chides the Lord in words that strike us as being blasphemous. At other times he gives glowing testimony to the power of the Word of God in his personal life.

#### *1. Footmen and Horsemen*

When the priestly men of Anathoth found out how Jeremiah was preaching against the Temple and sacrifice, they plotted to take his life (11:19). According to the Targum, they planned to put poison

in his food. But the Lord prevented them by making the prophet aware of their evil designs. It was then that the prophet described himself as a gentle lamb that was to be brought to the slaughter and as a fruit tree that was to be cut down. He was willing to grant that the Lord was righteous, but he had a question: Why did those wicked people prosper (12:1)? Could he not see the Lord's vengeance on them? Could *they* not be slaughtered like sheep?

But instead of showing sympathy to His prophet the Lord gave him a challenge: In terms of war the men of Anathoth were mere infantrymen (12:5). If he was already weary from this skirmish with such light forces, how did he ever expect to confront the far more formidable cavalrymen? That meant that he was to gird his loins and be about his job! The same challenge certainly applies to servants of the Word today.

## 2. *At Odds With the World*

This confession has been called "one of the most moving" of all of Jeremiah's personal laments (Bewer). He bemoans the fact that his mother gave birth to him. He is in conflict with the entire earth (15:10). He pleads with the Lord not to let him die prematurely. He recalls that whenever he received a word of revelation from the Lord, he ate that word. It was the greatest source of rejoicing to him (15:16). But now that he is suffering, it seems to him that the Lord is deceiving him. He is acting like a deceitful brook which looks very inviting to the thirsty traveler but then proves to be dry (15:18). The prophet complains that he dare not join any group of merry-makers. He is forbidden to have a wife or a family, to go to a house of mourning to express his sympathy, to sit down to any kind of sociable eating and drinking.

How did the Lord react to this prophetic sassiness? He was very firm. He warned the prophet to repent or be dismissed (15:19). He told him that if he did repent, his only reward would be more work and responsibility in the service of his Lord. If he humbly sifted the precious from the vile, i.e., stopped speaking so insolently, he would not only be permitted to function again as the Lord's mouthpiece, but the Lord would also make him as strong as a brazen wall, so that he would never trim the Lord's word or compromise it in any way.—The lessons for the modern preacher are quite obvious. He, too, faces opposition, yet he has the Lord's Word to sustain him. In the loneliness of his calling, he, too, is often inclined to chide the Lord. And so he needs to live in daily repentance, so that the Lord may equip him properly to serve as His ambassador.

### 3. *The Deceitful Heart*

The prophet recognized the cause of the vile words which he had ventured to address to the Lord. He knew that they were symptoms of a disease which he shared with the rest of depraved humanity. He admitted to the Lord that the trouble was in his heart, that there was a depth of wickedness there that was difficult to fathom and even more difficult to cure (17:9). As the Lord alone could search the heart, so he alone was the Physician who could relieve the disease. Therefore the prophet pleaded: "Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved; for Thou art my Hope" (17:14). Such an act of divine healing was the only thing that could make him loyal, that could prevent his running away from his job and being vindictive toward his opponents, that could enable him to speak with sincerity (17:16). Laetsch observes: "Here are three characteristics of a true preacher and pastor: obedience to God's call and command, refraining from venting one's own spite, sincerity in doing the work of the ministry" (pp. 165, 166).

### 4. *Out of the Depths*

Jeremiah proclaimed the Lord's judgment, but apparently it failed to come. This gave his opponents an opportunity to ridicule him. They challenged him to bring to pass what he had threatened (17:15). He sank into the depths of discouragement and frustration. Again he spoke to the Lord in a tone that bordered on the blasphemous. He complained that the Lord had seduced him the way a man seduces a maid, that the Lord used the force of a rapist to subdue him (20:7). He was so tired of preaching that he pondered the idea of giving it up; but he found that he could not keep silent because the Lord's Word kept burning like a fire in his heart and bones (20:9). Even his familiar friends watched for an opportunity to find fault with him and then to take revenge.

Driven to a state of desperation by the shame and persecution that beset him, this great man of God finally cursed the day of his birth and the man who brought the news of it; he wished that he had died in the womb, that his mother had been his grave (20:14-17).—One can only pray that the pastor of today may be spared the desperate struggles that this prophet went through. Still we must be ready to face similar crises. When they come, the confessions of Jeremiah are always available as a storehouse of rich pastoral experiences, as a veritable case history which the prophet of today certainly can study to great advantage.

## JEREMIAH, THE SUFFERER

As his confessions show, spiritual conflict was a basic element in the prophet's ministry. But that is not to say that he was without physical suffering. In fact, there is much in his experience as a sufferer that reminds the reader of the greater Sufferer whose ministry was so similar to that of Jeremiah.

His own townsmen in Anathoth turned against him, as the plot to murder him indicates (11:21). When Pashur, the policeman, heard his sermon on the broken bottle, he not only struck the prophet but also put him into the stocks (20:2). In his Temple address Jeremiah told the people that if they did not amend, God would make the Temple a heap of ruins like Shilo. This so enraged his hearers that the unruly mob threatened him with death (26:8). With the help of Ahikam, however, he managed to escape with his life (26:24). As a part of his ministry he was constrained to put an ox yoke around his neck as a symbol of the subjection of the nations under Babylon (27:2). As if this were not enough of a humiliation, the pseudo prophet Hananiah pulled the yoke from Jeremiah's neck and smashed it in the presence of all of the people to show his defiant attitude toward the prophet (28:10).

During a break in the siege of Jerusalem, Jeremiah tried to get out of the city to visit his native town of Anathoth, but he was intercepted by a guard (37:13). The guard turned him over to the princes who under King Zedekiah were not the prophet's friends. They beat him and put him into one of the dungeons under the house of Jonathan. The king, however, responded to Jeremiah's petition and had him transferred to the more livable court of the guard (37:21). There he was again free to speak, and he urged the people to desert and go over to the enemy. This time the hostile princes took him and let him down by cords into the miry cistern of Malchiah (38:6). While the sixty-year-old prophet was languishing in this muddy pit, "one of the finest episodes in the O.T." (G. A. Smith) took place. An Ethiopian eunuch named Ebed-melech had pity on him and came to his aid. Using old rags and worn-out clothes, he and his men very gently drew the prophet out of this damp hole and brought him back to the guard's court (38:13).

At the fall of Jerusalem, Jeremiah was at first released from the court of the guard by the Chaldeans and permitted to dwell among the people (39:14). Later, however, and apparently by mistake, he was put in chains and led to Ramah. There he was met by Nebuzaradan, the Chaldean commander, and not only released but given the choice

of going to Babylon or staying at Mizpah. The nobility of the prophet's character is reflected in his decision to remain with the remnant at Mizpah rather than to accept preferment in Babylon (40:6).

In the suffering of Jeremiah the church may see a reflection of its own life. When we look at the suffering of the great witnesses of God who have gone before us, we are strengthened by our sense of fellowship with them. We are shown, too, that very often our suffering is inconsequential by contrast with theirs. Above all, we are encouraged to take up our cross and follow Him who bore the suffering of the cross for us.

#### JEREMIAH, THE COMFORTER

If we remembered Jeremiah only for the sternness of his warnings, the honesty of his confessions, and the bitterness of his sufferings, we should be missing one of the most remarkable features of his entire career, namely, his message of divine mercy for the individual sinner. Among the great preachers of God's love, Jeremiah stands out between a very illustrious predecessor, Hosea, and a far more illustrious successor, Jesus. There was no one-sided emphasis on the wrath of God in his program. Rather the Lord told him: "Like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them" (32:42).

This emphasis on God's grace stands out in the prophet's attitude toward the people who were carried away to Babylon in the first deportation of 597 B.C. They were exiles, to be sure, but still they were like the good and edible figs which Jeremiah saw in front of the Temple. The Lord promised that He would regard them with favor, that they would be His people, and He would be their God (24:5,7). Jeremiah's famous epistle to these exiles (ch.29) ranks as the first of those spiritual letters which became so popular at Paul's time. It also exhibits some striking allusions to God's love.

When the exiles were bidden not to hate their Babylonian masters, but to pray for them, this not only was the clearest Old Testament passage calling for intercession for the enemy but also paved the way for mission expansion and a program of world evangelism (29:7). The Lord remembered the plans which He had in mind for these exiled people: the future was theirs. Not evil, but hopeful and blessed times were in store for them; they would seek the Lord and find Him as long as they searched with all their heart (29:11,13).

The section that is known as the Book of Comfort (chs.30—31) "contains some of the finest poems Jeremiah ever composed" (Bewer). It speaks of such distress on the Day of the Lord that men will labor

like women in childbirth, but still there will be deliverance for the children of God (30:6,7). They will serve Jehovah, their God, and David, their Messianic King, whom the Lord will send them (30:9). They will have a great Prince who will come out of their midst and who will hazard his life in drawing near unto God (30:21).

In and through this Prince God will richly comfort His people. He tells them: "I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn you unto Myself" (31:3). They will yet plant vineyards on the mountains of Samaria and go up to Jerusalem to worship the Lord (31:5,6). Though Rachel weeps for her children and refuses to be comforted for them, the Lord tells her to stop crying because her work is to be rewarded; there is hope in her future; her children will certainly return to their own border (31:17). Ephraim is still God's dear son and darling child. Whenever the Lord speaks of him, He remembers him with kindness. His heart yearns for him, and He will surely have mercy upon him. (31:20.)

The Lord plans a new covenant with His people, a different covenant than that of Sinai. He is going to put His Law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts. It will not be necessary for every man to teach his neighbor and his brother the knowledge of God; for all of them from the least to the greatest will know the Lord. The Lord will forgive their iniquity and not remember their sin. (31:31-34.)

The agent through whom the Lord will bring restoration and healing to His people will be that Branch of Righteousness who will grow up unto David (33:15). He will reign as king and will execute justice and righteousness in His kingdom (23:5). His name will be called the Lord, our Righteousness. He will not only be righteous Himself, He will also impart righteousness to His people (23:6). Through Him Israel and Judah will be saved, because His name will be imparted to them; they, too, will be called the Lord, our Righteousness (33:16).

This concludes the epitome of the Book of Jeremiah. As a church we have every reason to let this prophet speak today. He addresses himself to problems that surely are crucial in the life of our church. His message conveys the twin themes of judgment and mercy in terms that will reach into the lives of our people. His experiences as a pastor will be a rich source of information and encouragement for our ministry today. Let us study Jeremiah and bring his message to our people. For such a program the new Laetsch commentary will provide welcome assistance.

St. Louis, Mo.

*Studies on Old Testament Texts*

## FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

## PSALM 24

*The Text and Its Central Thought.*—David may have written Psalm 24 for the occasion of bringing the Ark from the house of Obed-Edom to Mount Zion (2 Samuel 6 and 1 Chronicles 15). — Vv. 1, 2: These verses extol the immeasurable glory of the Lord as the Creator of the earth and all its inhabitants. He has given every inanimate creation its shape and destiny, every animate creature its form and purpose. As Creator He laid down principles for the life cycles of everything He had made. Without hesitation David recognizes the Lord as the Possessor and Sovereign of all things. — Vv. 3-6: But on this festive day David's interest lies primarily in the "hill of the Lord" and "His holy place," i. e., Mount Zion and the Tabernacle, which were to be set aside and hallowed as the Lord's earthly abode. Therefore David concentrates on the kind of man who can ascend and take his stand in the presence of the Lord. His answer to the question in his mind at first glance seems superficial and inadequate, but vv. 5 and 6 show us the depth of his thought and clearly indicate that hands, hearts, minds, and mouths can follow through on David's description only when they have been touched and motivated by the Spirit of the Lord. David certainly brushes the mere outward act aside. Any hypocrite could qualify on that score. The man David holds forth has received "the blessing from the Lord and righteousness from the God of his salvation," i. e., forgiveness of sin and the assurance that the Lord Himself has provided and cemented a new relationship between Himself and man through the Messiah. The man who accepts and believes in this new relationship with the Lord has hands that will fold in earnest prayer, earn an honest living, pay all debts, give to the poor and missions; a heart that is filled with faith, unimpeachable motives, and laudable aims; a mind that will not lose itself in useless activity nor put any person or anything above the Lord; a mouth that will find its greatest satisfaction in speaking the truth. — Vv. 7-10: These verses with their questions and answers concentrate on the King of Glory, the Lord of Creation, the matchless Messiah, the incomparable Redeemer. David's joy rings through every one of these verses. He calls upon doors, gates, and hearts to open wide so that He

who is worthy to enter may enter freely. There can be no doubt about who this King of Glory is. He is none other than the Messiah, Jesus Christ. It is significant to note how often David uses "Jehovah" in the Psalm. He is talking of the covenant God who visits his people in mercy and showers love and forgiveness upon them in abundance. The terms "strong and mighty" and "mighty in battle" carry pointed meaning, too. They do not let us stop with the many evidences of the Lord's power when He stepped into the breach for His people in the long years of wandering in the wilderness and later on gave them repeated victories on many battlefields. The terms just mentioned unquestionably refer to the battle which only the Lord Jesus Himself could enter and carry through to victory, the battle against sin, death, devil, and hell.

*The Day and Its Theme.*—According to a long-standing custom of the church the first Sunday in Advent involved a call to the Christian people to let the Lord God enter their hearts. No other call can take precedence over this one. The church continues as such only so long as Christ dwells in her. It is of the utmost importance for the church to heed this call and so insure spiritual health and growth for another year.

*The Goal and Purpose of the Sermon.*—The sermon ought to lead the hearer to come to a better understanding of the relationship between the Lord and himself. It should deepen his desire to live in the Lord and give himself wholeheartedly to God's service.

*Sin Diagnosed and Remedied.*—Hand, heart, mind, and mouth mentioned in v. 4 open up the gamut of sin and make it quite difficult for us to know where to stop. These members of ours are so fruitful in finding new ways of sinning. On this day it is well for us to think about the times we neglected prayer, Bible study, the family altar, attendance at divine service, the Lord's Table, and increasing our contributions to the Lord's treasury. Even though we might have been fairly consistent, we must admit that we did not always do our best. A welcome change will come when the King of Glory enters our heart to give us a new point of view and a fresh start.

*Opportunity for Explicit Gospel.*—Several terms are loaded with Gospel content. "Lord," "blessing from the Lord," "righteousness from the God of his salvation," "seek Him," "King of Glory," talk to us about the God who planned and perfected our salvation. Cf. Eph. 1:3-14.

*Illustrations.*—Since the population of our country and the world is increasing rapidly and rampant sin is piling up distress, it is well

to use this sociological fact to point up the need and urgency for every Christian to heed the Advent invitation.

### Outline

The Advent Invitation: Open Your Heart to the Lord

- I. To receive the King of Glory
  - A. He is the Creator and Sovereign of the earth.
  - B. He is the Redeemer of the world.
  - C. He is the Protector of the church.
- II. To benefit through His blessing
  - A. He gives you forgiveness of sin.
  - B. He stands by you in your mental and physical troubles.
  - C. He gives you the assurance of life everlasting.
- III. To serve Him with your gifts
  - A. With His assistance you build a Christian home.
  - B. With His guidance you use yourself and your means to expand His kingdom.

St. Louis, Mo.

\_\_\_\_\_ ALEX. WM. C. GUEBERT

### SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT

ZEPH. 3:14-20

*The Text and Its Central Thought.*—Zephaniah brought a message of Law and Gospel to Jerusalem and Judah at the time of King Josiah. Chapter 1 describes the evidences of God's judgment over sin, idolatry, and rebellion, carried out through internal violence and external war and pillage. Chapter 2 reinforces the warning against Judah by showing how also its enemies shall be laid waste; cf. also 3:5-7. All of this violence and destruction in history has one purpose: that the people of God may hear His Word and worship Him (3:8-12). And now comes a promise upon that portion that heeds the warning Word and proves its repentance (v. 13) and a psalm of praise, first from the lips of one who is in the praising group (vv. 14-17), and then from the lips of God Himself, giving a promise of rescue and of help to carry out the purpose of God's people on earth (vv. 18-20).

V. 14: The praise is to be sung by "daughter of Zion," "Israel," "daughter of Jerusalem." But the context indicates that it is specifically the "remnant of Israel" (v. 13) — whether originally Jewish or whether God's dispersed throughout the nations (vv. 9, 10, 19, 20) — that is

meant, the spiritual Israel throughout the New Testament world (Rom. 9:6 ff.; Gal. 4:26; Rev. 3:9). — V. 15: judgments are here the demonstrations of God's wrath over rebellion, His sentence over sin. The enemy of God's people and of God is cast out, and in his place is God Himself as King and Protector. — V. 16: Hence a great message pervades the spiritual people of God: fear not, don't hesitate to lift up your hands in joy and adoration, instead of leaving them slack in fear and apathy; cf. Is. 40:9. — V. 17: The burden of the message is that God, restored to His people, is mighty. He will save and keep on saving. He will find His joy in His saved people. He will be peacefully satisfied in His love, no longer contriving judgment and destruction but forgiving and blessing. — V. 18: The Lord God speaks; the text is difficult. RSV conjectures that the first words go with 17: "As on a day of festival"; and continues: "I will remove disaster from you so that you will not bear reproach for it." Luther: "Die, so durch Satzungen geängstet waren, will ich wegschaffen, welche Satzungen ihre Last waren, davon sie Schmach hatten." The KJV is literal and suggests God's decree to call His people together, from all over the world and in every age, away from their gatherings of mourning into His own company of rejoicing. — Vv. 19 and 20 speak the mighty hope of God's people, in that He will rescue them, bring them back from dispersion and captivity, and give them honor among all men — honor that is His doing and that involves the appreciation of the nations for the blessing brought them by God's people. The pervading idea: Rejoice that God delivers His people in love.

*The Day and Its Theme.* — This Sunday, in its Propers, stresses not so much the incarnation of Christ as it does the hope of God's people in every age, climaxing in the deliverance of the last Judgment. God's Day, the working out of His purpose, is revealed in the cataclysms that interpret His judgment upon men, but it is supreme in the plan by which he takes fear from the heart of His people and guarantees its salvation. This text speaks not only of the final Judgment but also of God's succor that makes His people a blessing already before the end of time. The accent in *Parish Activities* on thought for others reflects itself particularly in what it is that makes God's people "a name and a praise among all the people of the earth," namely, their response to God's rescue and their telling of His good news.

*The Goal and Purpose of the Sermon.* — The preacher has the choice of goals: that his people should hope that God's redemption in Christ turns their lives to joy and witness or that they should rejoice in their

own rescue from death. These are roughly the accents of Epistle and Gospel for the day. We suggest the latter.

*The Diagnosis of Sin.*—The chief Law preaching of the Book comes before this text. The cues for it in the text are v. 15, "thine enemy." Flesh and devil still at work among Christians. V. 16: "let not thine hands be slack," the apathy toward thankfulness and worship that pervades Christians under the stresses or the materialism of life.

*Opportunities for Explicit Gospel.*—V. 15: "The Lord is in the midst of thee" is a good Messianic note similar to Is. 7:14; v. 17 stresses God's carrying out a redemptive plan at the expense of His sacrificial love and finishing it thoroughly; "save" (v. 19) and "gather" (v. 20) are strong Messianic words interpretable in God's act in Christ.

*Illustrations and New Testament Parallels.*—The whole process of history is God's gathering His people from multifarious exiles. America a haven for the oppressed, or Israeli for persecuted Jews; how much more the people of God a rallying point for men plucked from death. Note Eph. 1:10 ff. as a counterpart of vv. 17-20.

#### Outline

#### Rejoice That God Delivers His People in Love

- I. God's people are lost
  - A. In exile among the people of the world.
  - B. Tormented by enemies and the enemy.
  - C. Reminded of their plight by the disasters of history.
- II. God delivers His people in love
  - A. His great plan of love is carried out to its fulfilment.
  - B. It involves His coming to dwell among His people.
  - C. Therewith He delivers His people from their exile and gathers them.
- III. Hence rejoice!
  - A. Lift up hands in adoration.
  - B. Tell the message: "Fear thou not," within the church and beyond it.

St. Louis, Mo.

RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

## THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT

MALACHI 3:1-6

*The Context, Text, and Central Thought.*—In Mal. 2:17—4:6 the Prophet addresses himself to the people of Israel, who were displaying a spirit of discontent because the expected judgmental visitation of the glory of God did not occur. This discontent is voiced in 2:17 and 3:13-15. "Evildoers prosper; therefore God is not just; so there is no profit in serving Him."

The Prophet meets this challenge with the answer "The Lord will visit Israel" (3:1,2). By His visitation He will refine the nation of Israel, which is murmuring because He doesn't come (3:3,4), and destroy those who do not fear Him (3:5). This visitation is sure, because God is unchangeably holy and must purify His people—by the destruction of the wicked and the refinement of the righteous (3:6).

The Prophet instructs the people that their own unrighteousness has withheld the visitation of God (3:7-12). He warns them that only the righteous will stand in the day of His visitation (3:16-18). Because God's visiting will have a twofold purpose: the destruction of the wicked (4:1), the healing of the righteous (4:2). Hence, the adequate preparation for God's visit is, "Remember the Law of Moses," and make your hearts like the hearts of your fathers (4:4-6).

In this context our text gives the assurance that God, after His way is prepared, will visit Israel (v.1) and states that the purpose of His visit is to cleanse His people of sin—by refining the righteous (vv.3,4), by destroying the wicked (v.5). The guarantee of this visit is found in the fact that God's people must be made like their unchangingly holy God (v.6).

*The Day and Its Theme.*—The Collect states the theme: "Lighten the darkness of our hearts by Thy gracious visitation." The Introit antiphon derives from another pre-Reformation Epistle pericope. It anticipates next Sunday's Epistle. The Introit Psalm (Psalm 85) speaks so beautifully of God's visitation of forgiveness (v.2), salvation (v.7), righteousness and peace (v.10), that we advise the ancient custom of reading the entire Psalm. The Epistle demands faithfulness of the ministers of Christ in their God-given task of preparing men for God's visitation. The Gospel introduces John the Baptist as the first of the preparatory messengers of Christ. The text gives all messengers of Christ their message: "God comes to lighten the darkness of our hearts by His gracious visitation."

*The Goal and Purpose of the Sermon.*—To make God's gracious visitation more real by explaining what is its nature; to make God's gracious visitation more pleasant by removing the sins that retard and impede it.

*Sin to be Diagnosed and Remedied.*—The sins depicted by Israel, which also cling to us: doubting God's visitation of judgment, exemplified by envying the wicked and turning to their sins without fearing God, remedied by the assurance of God's visitation of judgment so that men will fear God; revolting against God's visitation of mercy, exemplified by a reluctance to be refined so that we may offer pleasing sacrifices to God, remedied by the assurance of God's visitation of mercy that we may love God, best expressed in Rom. 8:1-4: "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. . . . For God has done what the Law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. Sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the just requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit."

*Opportunities for Explicit Gospel.*—"The Lord . . . will come" (v. 1) is the final Old Testament repetition of the first Gospel promise made to man (Gen. 3:15), more clearly expressed to Abraham: "In thy seed will all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 22:18). In the atoning work of Jesus Christ we have the answer to the question of v. 2: "Who can endure the Day of His coming?" Christ's suffering for us is our motivation for entering and continuing the process of refinement (vv. 2, 3; cf. 1 Peter 2:19-25; 4:12-19; 1:3-9). Faith in Him is the basic requirement for offering right offerings to the Lord (v. 4; cf. Heb. 11:6).

*Old and New Testament Parallels.*—The text must be studied against the background of Is. 40:3-11; 57:14-21; 62:10-12, of which it is a summary. The New Testament fulfillment of this prophecy is found in Luke 1:15-17; 32-35. Confirmation of John the Baptist's ministry of preparation is given in Matt. 3:1-12; Mark 1:2-8; Luke 3:2-18, and by our Lord in Matt. 11:7-15 (Gospel); Luke 7:24-30; Matt. 17:9-13; Mark 9:11-13. The judgmental character of Christ's visitation is told in John 3:19-21; 9:35-41.

### Outline

Introduction: Discuss evidences of doubt concerning God's visitation as shown by Israel at the time of Malachi and by men of our day.

### God's Visitation to Lighten the Darkness of Our Hearts

#### I. The assurance of God's visitation

- A. Affirmed by the preparatory messenger (v. 1 a).
- B. Affirmed by the promise of God, "The Lord of Hosts has said" (v. 1 b).
- C. Affirmed by the unchanging holiness of God (v. 6).

#### II. The purpose of God's visitation.

- A. To destroy the wicked (v. 5).
- B. To refine His people (vv. 2-4).

Conclusion: The Christ to whom the Law and Prophets bear witness has come to fulfill them. He laid down His life for us to bear our sin and redeem us from the dominion of sin, so that we, freed from the condemnation of the Law, might fulfill the just requirements of that Law as a pleasant offering to God. Through removing our sins and purifying our sinful nature God's visitation lightens the darkness of our hearts.

St. Louis, Mo.

HOLLAND JONES

### FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

ISAIAH 40:1-10

*The Text and Its Central Thought.*—Dark days were in store for Jerusalem and Judea. The prophet Isaiah, in chapter 39:5-8, announced to Hezekiah the coming Babylonian Captivity, God's judgment on the nation which Jehovah had chosen out of the nations of the earth but which had consistently proved unfaithful to the Lord. But even in punishing God still remained Israel's God, and for Him the nation with which He had made His covenant remained "My people." He cannot deny His character as the merciful and faithful One. And so the Prophet hears the divine summons directed to himself and other prophets to dispense comfort to God's people by proclaiming to Jerusalem that "her warfare," i. e., the hardship and trouble caused by her sin, had come to an end, since double pardon was available from the hand of God. In the Spirit the Prophet was spanning eight centuries and hearing the voice of one John the Baptist (Matt. 1:3), who was destined by God to preach repentance in preparation for the coming of the Lord in the flesh. Drawing on what was evidently a familiar scene in his day, Isaiah in vivid imagery describes the changes which the human heart must undergo for a worthy welcome of the Lord, the Christ. The humble should take courage, the proud become lowly,

and those who have hitherto closed their hearts should become receptive for the Lord's message of grace. And so the Lord's purpose in coming to His people will be achieved. Through those who welcome Him as their Lord His glory will become manifest before the eyes of all the people of the world, and the truth of God's promises of salvation will be established.

In this connection the Prophet receives instructions to preach and emphasize the fallacy of putting one's trust in man, who is ephemeral like the grass. God's word with its promises alone has enduring worth. And so the true Zion, which has God's Word and puts her trust in it, is encouraged to proclaim to the cities of Judah the glad news that the Lord is in their midst to dispense salvation. In conclusion the text takes note of the fact that the Lord who comes is the Lord God, endowed with divine power to rule as Lord over all. He will deal with men in accordance with their attitude toward Him. Herein lies hope and joy for those who gladly receive Him, but a note of warning for those who reject Him.

*The Day and Its Theme.*—The Epistle motivates its exhortation to rejoice in the Lord always with the assertion that the Lord is near. The Gospel relates how John the Baptist directs the inquiring Jews to Jesus, who had made His appearance among them. Both thoughts, the nearness of the Lord and the duty to lead others to Him, find an echo in our text.

*Sins to Be Remedied.*—During the Advent season preoccupation with making preparations for the external observance of the Christmas season is likely to dull the awareness of the spiritual meaning of the coming of the Savior in the flesh. Nothing of an extraneous nature should be allowed to intrude upon the Christian's worshipful appreciation of the divine mystery "God was made manifest in the flesh."

#### Outline

The Advent Summons: Prepare the Way for the Coming of the Lord

#### I. A message of comfort for us who believe in Him

- A. It recognizes that we are sinners (v. 2).
- B. But assures us of double pardon for our sins (v. 2).
- C. Confirms in us the conviction of the absolute dependability of God's Word in a world of uncertainty (v. 8).
- D. Directs our look forward to the Lord's gracious reward (v. 10).

II. An exhortation which stirs us to greater zeal in behalf of Christ's kingdom

- A. The Lord wants to come to all kinds of people (v.4).
- B. He desires His glory revealed among all flesh (v.5).
- C. Hence the church is charged with bringing the good tidings to the world at large clearly and without fear (v.9).
- D. The Lord Himself will support His cause (v.10).

St. Louis, Mo.

G. V. SCHICK

CHRISTMAS DAY—THE FEAST OF THE NATIVITY

ISAIAH 9:6,7

*The Text and Its Central Thought.*—The first twelve chapters of Isaiah contain prophecies of judgment and doom for the Kingdom of Judah. Three odd-numbered chapters, however (7, 9, 11), also contain some of the best-known Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament. Ch. 7 announces the birth of Immanuel; ch. 9 gives Him the unique set of names: Wonderful, etc.; ch. 11 pictures Him as the Twig and the Branch issuing from David's family tree. These insertions are a good example of the way in which the Prophet alternates in his preaching of Law and Gospel.

1. The conjunction *for* at the beginning of v. 6 is very significant. It refers back to vv. 2-5 and thus gives *four reasons* why the wonderful Child was born:

A. Judah and the world at large were in *darkness* (v.2). Natural man gropes about in spiritual darkness. The shadow of death surrounds him constantly. Therefore the Child brought light and life, not a light like the flash of an atom bomb which deals out death but a light that radiates and glows with life.

B. Multiple *sorrow* was the aftermath of the fall (v.3). God had said, "I will greatly *multiply* thy sorrow." But the Child was born so that *joy* might be *multiplied* (read with RSV, "Thou hast increased its joy"), a joy like that of the harvest festival or of victorious soldiers.

C. Spiritual *bondage* was the lot of all men (v.4). Man's slavery under sin was like bearing a heavy yoke or burden, like being struck on the back with staves and rods. Therefore the Child came to break this burdensome yoke and to shatter those rods and staves in a victory as miraculous as Gideon's over the Midianites (Judg. 7:19-23).

D. *War* was being aggressively waged by man's enemies (v.5). They had effective equipment for bringing men to their knees:

marching boots that enabled them to trample roughshod over their opponents, uniforms that were scarlet-colored from the blood which they absorbed (cf. RSV). But the Child turned the tide in this war, stripping the foe of boots and uniforms and burning all of his equipment.

II. Those were the reasons for the gift of the Son. But how could the Son effect such a deliverance from darkness, sorrow, bondage, and war? The four names that were given Him give us a clue to His power and ability (v. 6).

A. Wonderful Counsellor! What a miracle Child: born of a virgin, both God and man in one person, entirely without sin! How eminently suited to be our Adviser and Guide: our temptations and problems were His, His divine counsel and wisdom were ours.

B. Mighty God! Another tribute to the Child's deity: a frail, helpless, human infant, and yet the mighty God Himself. He has full responsibility for the world's government, all things are placed under His feet. He is indeed able to be the Author of our redemption.

C. Everlasting Father! He that hath seen the Son hath seen the Father. The Son and the Father are one. They were always one, also before the Incarnation ("before Abraham was, I am"). The Son is also "one who continually acts as a father to his people" (Skinner).

D. Prince of Peace! A royal Prince indeed, of the very dynasty of heaven. A heavenly Prince to restore the heavenly peace, which man had terminated. Under Him swords will be beaten into plowshares, spears into pruning hooks, war will be past (Is. 2:4).

III. Such glorious names qualify the Son as the Establisher of an equally glorious kingdom (v. 7). It is a kingdom that

A. Constantly expands and increases. The Great Commission. Evangelism. Program of home and world missions.

B. Is assured of peace. Its peace cannot be disturbed, strife and warfare cannot recur, because the Prince reigns supreme.

C. Is based on justice and righteousness. As its Head brought justice and righteousness to His subjects, so they in turn practice justice and righteousness toward one another.

D. Endures from henceforth even forever. Its members pass from suffering to glory, from cross to crown, from knowing in part to seeing face to face.

*The Day and Its Theme.*—On the Feast of the Nativity Christians rejoice because "the Son of the Father is born." It is significant that the words of the text (Is. 9:6, 7) are used both in the Epistle and in the Introit for Christmas Day. The Collect for Christmas Night, point-

ing to Christ as the true Light, has its roots in Is. 9:2. The Epistle and the Collect for Christmas Day speak of the newborn Christ's redeeming us from the old bondage of sin (Is. 9:4).

*The Goal and Purpose of the Sermon.*—The hearers need to be made aware of the darkness, sorrow, bondage, and strife which characterize their human lot, so that they may lay hold on the light, joy, freedom, and peace which Christ brings them and may, in turn, become effective instruments in helping to preserve and expand His kingdom of justice and righteousness.

*Sins to Be Diagnosed and Remedied.*—Darkness is the symbol of ignorance. The worst ignorance is failure to recognize sin for what it is. Bondage points to those habitual sins, those deeply entrenched vices, which quickly become our masters when they are not curbed. Boots and uniforms suggest the bold attitude of those who challenge God's world leadership and defy Him to bring on His judgment.

*Opportunities for Explicit Gospel.*—The Son is a *gift*, undeserved by man. God so *loved* that He gave. The phrase *unto us* is meaningful. The Son was certainly given, not just for the Jews, not just for the believers, but *for all men*. All are entitled to His grace and salvation. Only those, however, who kiss the Son in the allegiance of faith (Ps. 2:11, 12) can testify and say, "He is given *unto us*" (Stoeckhardt).

### Outline

#### Unto Us a Son Is Given!

- I. The gifts which He brings
  - A. Light (v. 2).
  - B. Joy (v. 3).
  - C. Freedom (v. 4).
  - D. Peace (v. 5).
- II. The names which characterize Him (v. 6)
  - A. Wonderful Counsellor.
  - B. Mighty God.
  - C. Everlasting Father.
  - D. Prince of Peace.
- III. The Kingdom which He establishes (v. 7)
  - A. An Expanding Kingdom.
  - B. A Kingdom of Peace.
  - C. A Kingdom of Justice and Righteousness.
  - D. An Eternal Kingdom.

St. Louis, Mo.

ALFRED VON ROHR SAUER

## BRIEF STUDIES

### THE LUTHERAN CHURCH AS EVALUATED BY A SEARCHER

In our times a number of scholars, scientists, and other intellectuals, heretofore independent, have gone shopping for the organized church. Three of them, James Pike, William Pollard, and Chad Walsh, eventually joined the Episcopal Church. In *I Chose the Episcopal Church* Chad Walsh, who is professor of English at Beloit College, Beloit, Wis., and author of such widely read books as *Campus Gods on Trial*, *Early Christians of the 21st Century*, and *Stop Looking and Listen*, narrates how in his own case he stopped looking when he found what he was searching for in the Episcopal Church.

Asked whether in his search for a church home he had also probed into the theology and liturgy of the Lutheran Church, Professor Walsh replied as follows to the undersigned:

"You asked about my 'church-sampling' period. It happens that I rather quickly narrowed the field down to the Lutheran and Episcopal churches. I already had a slight Lutheran background, having attended Marion (Va.) College as a day student for two years. However, while there I still considered myself an atheist and insulated myself from religious influences as much as possible. I suppose, though, enough Lutheranism must have penetrated my armor for me to have a feeling of especial interest in the Lutheran Church when, at about the age of 29 or 30, I became convinced that orthodox Christianity is true, and that I should join a church.

"There was a period of about a year during which I see-sawed between the Episcopal and Lutheran churches. I had the feeling I couldn't go badly wrong with either. I recognized the many things they have in common, such as firm theology, a sense of the 'Church,' and liturgical, God-centered worship.

"I am not wholly clear in my own mind just why I made the choice I did; certainly some of the reasons are rather accidental, such as a close friend who introduced me to the Anglican tradition. However, as best I can analyze it at this distance of time, I think I decided on the Episcopal Church for these reasons:

"(1) I felt it had a slight liturgical edge. In particular, the language of the Book of Common Prayer seemed to me a little more perfect than that of the Lutheran services. (I suppose the English scholar was

operating in me at this point; certainly I would not defend this as a basis of choice, but I guess I can help you most by confessing my naivete).

"(2) The Lutheran Church struck me as being especially associated with certain ethnic groups, especially the German and Scandinavian. Since my own background is British Isles, I felt a little bit like an outsider.

"(3) I had a stronger sense of historical continuity with the primitive church in the Episcopal Communion. It is true that I had no very definite theories at this time about the apostolic succession of bishops, but at the very least the succession gave me a sense of visible continuity reaching both backward and forward in time.

"(4) I admired the uncompromising honesty of Lutheran preaching, with its emphasis on sin, judgment, redemption. But I often wished that I could hear more said about the love of God as well as the wrath of God, and about the original goodness of man and creation as well as the subsequent corruption. All in all, the Lutheran Church struck me as a little 'beetle-browed' and dour. What I missed in it was any strong note of joy and reverent gaiety.

"(5) I never studied the matter sufficiently to be sure of the Lutheran attitude toward the Bible, but I got the impression that it tended toward a greater degree of literalism than I can accept, and that by many Lutherans the theory of evolution, for example, is regarded as incompatible with the biblical faith.

"(6) At the same time, I sensed an earnestness in the Lutheran Church, a determination to make Christianity a 24-hour-a-day faith, and a strong sense of responsibility of one Christian for another. I must admit that this seemed more evident in the Lutheran than the Episcopal Church.

"(7) At the risk of revealing my ignorance still further, I should add that I sensed at the time, and still sense, that a great deal more intellectual ferment seems to be going on in European Lutheranism than in American. I often get the impression that many of the thoughtful Lutherans I know have a defensive cast of mind, that they are trying to build walls to keep difficult questions from entering their minds, rather than welcoming the questions and exploring them as means of deepening their understanding of the Gospel."

RUDOLPH NORDEN

[ED. NOTE: This letter is printed with the permission of the writer. In publishing it we want to share with our readers the reactions of an intelligent, cultured man to our church without discussing the validity of his appraisal.]

## AN OUTSIDER COMES IN AND LOOKS BACK \*

Prior to our coming to Canada my wife and I had become disturbed about the Church of England for the following reasons:

1. The lack of clear Gospel preaching in the majority of churches. Many sermons were primarily the opinions of the minister.

2. The doctrinal confusion. On the extreme "right" were the Anglo-Catholics, who emphasized the Sacrifice of the Mass and the necessity of its daily offering, in fact, a return to pre-Reformation theology.

On the extreme left were those who indeed claimed the Bible as their sole authority but whose interpretation was essentially Zwinglian or Calvinist.

In the middle were a group of sincere people who attempted to compromise between the two schools.

3. The numerous Modernist clergy and their toleration within the church.

4. The toleration of Masonry not only among the laity but also the clergy.

When we came to Canada, we found the Anglican Church far more humanistic than in England. Always in England, in spite of the confusion, one could usually find a church where the minister had at least something of the Gospel to offer.

We listened to the Lutheran Hour which we had heard over the short wave when in England, and we were much impressed. I should add that as an Anglo-Catholic I was intensely suspicious of any form of Protestantism because I associated it with (a) revivalism, (b) emotional worship without order, (c) no real Sacraments, and (d) a puritanical view of life. However, we decided to attend a Lutheran church in Lent.

We were at once impressed by the thoroughly Biblical preaching and, in addition, by the clear, authoritative answers given to any of our questions during our period of instruction on the basis of Scripture.

I began to read my Bible with new insight and found a power in it I had never known before.

The transition from Anglo-Catholicism to Lutheranism is not as great as it might seem, once I was satisfied that the Lutheran doctrine of the ministry was correct. As an Anglican I believed in Baptismal regeneration and the Real Presence, and it wasn't difficult to shed the "almost transubstantiation" doctrine of Anglo-Catholics.

\* ED. NOTE: The writer is senior physician at the Hospital for Mental Diseases, Province of Manitoba, Selkirk, Man.

In brief, then, the Lutheran Church has given me the following which I had never had before:

1. Conviction and "power unto Salvation" in the Word as the sure guide in faith and morals.
2. An understanding of what a perfect and simple whole Scripture is in the light of Christ and justification by faith.
3. A purified and strengthened belief in the Sacraments.
4. The ability to test the doctrines of any other church in the light of the Word.
5. A living faith to teach my children.
6. A complete unity of faith in my family.
7. An appreciation of the high standard of scholarship in the Lutheran Church.
8. The end of disputations in search of true doctrine.

H. B. KIDD, *M. B. B. Chir.*

## THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER

### BRIEF ITEMS FROM "RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE"

*Washington, D. C.* — President Eisenhower signed legislation allowing churches and religious organizations to enter their publications as second-class mail without having to maintain separate subscription and membership lists.

Under a previous law, church organizations were required to obtain a signed statement from their members that a part of their contributions should be regarded as a subscription to the periodical. Scientific and fraternal organizations have for many years been able to send their publications to members upon a simple resolution to their boards of directors. However, this privilege was not extended to churches, since they do not generally collect specific membership dues or fees.

At hearings before the House Post Office Committee, it was pointed out that many churches have inadvertently been violating the law, unaware of the technical requirement. The new law will particularly benefit churches which maintain parish bulletins. Such bulletins can now be entered as second-class matter, mailable at one and one-half cents a pound or one-eighth cent apiece, by resolution of the governing board of a church that all persons carried on the membership rolls shall receive the parish paper. The privilege will also be open to diocese and denominational papers, although most of these operate on the basis of specific subscription lists.

*Mexico City.* — Our Lady of Guadalupe, patroness of the Americas, will be crowned "Queen of Work and Workers" at a special ceremony on December 11, a day before her feast day is celebrated throughout Mexico.

It will be the first time the Virgin has been named patroness and protectress of workers anywhere in the world.

### BRIEF ITEMS FROM THE NEWS BUREAU OF THE NATIONAL LUTHERAN COUNCIL

*New York.* — Membership of the Lutheran Churches in America passed the seven-million mark in 1954. According to the annual statistical summary compiled by the Division of Public Relations of the National Lutheran Council, Lutheran Churches in the United States and Canada reported 7,117,906 members in 1954, an increase of 248,840, or 3.6 per cent, over the previous year. The average gain during the past five years has been about three per cent.

Comprising the third largest Protestant denominational grouping in America, the Lutheran Church is exceeded in members only by the Baptists and Methodists. Of the total Lutherans, 6,906,331 are located in the United States and 211,575 in Canada. The latter are affiliated with churches in the U.S. The Council's summary is based on statistics supplied by sixteen Lutheran church bodies plus the Negro Missions conducted by four groups associated in the Synodical Conference. For the first time in many years all the bodies replied to requests for data.

Of the sixteen groups, thirteen recorded gains in membership in 1953, while three showed losses, as did Negro Missions. Most of the losses are accounted for by revision of figures which had remained unchanged for several years. The increase in baptized membership of 248,840 for 1954, distributed among the 17,239 congregations, represents an average increase of 14.4 new members per local church, compared to 11.5 in 1953, 11.7 in 1952, 10.4 in 1951, and 10 in 1950. Confirmed or adult membership increased by 139,012 persons to a grand total of 4,797,727, a gain of 3 per cent. This would indicate an average accession of 8.1 adult members per congregation in 1954, compared with 6.3 in 1953, six in 1952, 5.4 in 1951, and 5.7 in 1950.

For the tenth consecutive year the highest numerical increase was made by The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Its gain of 84,625 baptized members, or 4.4 per cent over 1953, boosted the Synod's total to 2,001,135. Over the past decade it has added 561,764 members, an average of 56,176 annually. The Missouri Synod is the second-largest Lutheran body in America.

Among the major bodies, the American Lutheran Church for the second consecutive year showed the greatest advance on a percentage basis, its 37,703 additions representing a gain of 4.6 per cent. The ALC, with 862,238 members, is the fourth-largest Lutheran body. Close behind was the Evangelical Lutheran Church, which up to 1953 had the greatest gain on a percentage basis for seven successive years. It reported an increase of 41,112 members or 4.5 per cent in 1954. With 960,952 members, the ELC is the third-largest Lutheran body. The United Lutheran Church in America, largest of the sixteen, reported an increase of 62,908 members, or 2.9 per cent, for a total membership of 2,206,280.

Other gains were reported as follows: Augustana Lutheran Church, 17,328, or 3.5 per cent, to 516,968; Joint Synod of Wisconsin, 6,022 or 1.9 per cent, to 328,969; Lutheran Free Church, 2,869, or 4.4 per

cent, to 68,773; United Evangelical Lutheran Church, 2,979, or 5.5 per cent, to 56,908; Suomi Synod 2,431, or 7.9 per cent, to 33,314.

Also, American Evangelical Lutheran Church, 741, or 3.5 per cent, to 21,847; Slovak Church, 180, or 0.9 per cent, to 20,988; Norwegian Synod, 1,334, or 12.1 per cent, to 12,371; and Eielsen Synod, 75, or 4.8 per cent, to 1,625. The National Evangelical Lutheran Church showed a loss of 497 members, or 5.7 per cent, to 8,187; Finnish Apostolic Church, 8,292, or 50.9 per cent, to 8,001; and Lutheran Brethren, 796, or 20.3 per cent, to 3,133.

Negro Missions, conducted jointly by the Missouri Synod, Wisconsin Synod, Norwegian Synod, and Slovak Church, reported a decrease of 1,892, or 23.3 per cent, to 6,217. In explanation it was said that a rising number of the Negro congregations are affiliating with the Missouri Synod.

In the field of parish education the churches enrolled a record total of 3,226,552 pupils, 226,629 more than in 1953. Sunday schools gained 138,678 pupils; vacation Bible schools, 74,922; released-time schools, 7,951; and parochial schools, 5,078. The pupils were taught by 326,007 teachers, a gain of 37,457, in 29,703 schools, a gain of 237.

Sunday schools had 2,240,653 pupils in 16,655 schools, with 252,402 teachers; vacation Bible schools had 741,960 pupils in 9,690 schools, with 62,230 teachers; released-time schools had 102,573 in 1,810 schools, with 6,711 teachers; and parochial schools had 141,366 pupils in 1,548 schools, with 4,644 teachers. Most of the parochial, or Christian day schools were conducted by The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, with 1,177, the Joint Synod of Wisconsin, with 214, and the American Lutheran Church, with 76.

The number of ordained ministers rose to 15,881, an increase of 268 over 1953. Of these, 12,136, or 189 more than the previous year, were serving pastorates in 1954.

A total of 233 churches were organized, 111 more than in 1953, to raise the number of congregations to 17,239, while the total of preaching stations dropped by 122 to a total of 408.

Property valuation passed the billion-dollar mark for the third straight year, with an increase of \$123,166,922, or 11 per cent, to a record high of \$1,238,843,998. At the same time, indebtedness increased by \$22,554,039, or 16.8 per cent, to a total of \$156,766,470. In 1945 church debts amounted to \$14,656,131, but the trend has been sharply upward every year since then.

In congregational finances, expenditures by the churches for local expenses increased by \$21,664,038 to \$218,214,297. Contributions

to church work at large increased by \$6,311,849 to \$54,297,470. Total expenditures amounted to \$272,511,767, an increase of \$27,975,887 over 1953.

A separate compilation of statistics for the Lutheran churches in Canada, included in the foregoing figures, revealed that Canada has 211,575 baptized members and 138,338 confirmed or adult members. They were served by 1,010 congregations and 88 preaching places. The clerical roll consists of 550 pastors, of whom 447 are serving congregations.

Property of the Canadian Lutheran churches, which are all affiliated with parent bodies in the U.S., is valued at \$23,062,210, with indebtedness of \$3,148,108. During 1954 they devoted \$4,066,733 to local expenses and \$982,380 to church work at large. Total expenditures amounted to \$5,049,113.

*New York.*—The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has decided to terminate the co-operative activities which it has carried on with the National Lutheran Council among Lutheran refugees in Great Britain for the past seven years. Formal notice of the Missouri Synod's plans to withdraw from the program was given by Dr. H. A. Mayer of St. Louis, its Secretary of Missions, in a letter to Dr. Paul C. Empie, Executive Director of the NLC.

Dr. Mayer stated that the joint support of the Lutheran Council of Great Britain has been "a constant source of embarrassment to the officials of the Synod" and that its action in England has been "misunderstood and misinterpreted both within the ranks of our Synod and among Lutherans of other Synods."

The Lutheran Council of Great Britain was established in 1948 by the NLC and the Missouri Synod to provide a ministry to some 40,000 Lutheran DP's and refugees who entered England, Scotland, and Wales in the late forties. The NLC's responsibility was later transferred to the Lutheran World Federation, with major financial support continuing from the United States.

The Council now supervises the work of some 30 pastors who are serving the refugees in 250 congregations and preaching points. Most of the exiles are Germans, Poles, Latvians, and Estonians, but nearly a dozen nationalities are represented in their numbers.

Dr. David L. Ostergren, now on furlough in this country, has been the NLC/LWF representative in Great Britain since 1949, after a year's temporary assignment there in 1948, when he laid the groundwork for the formation of the Lutheran Council. He is a member of the Augustana Lutheran Church.

A statement accompanying Dr. Mayer's letter pointed out that the emergency status of relief activities in Great Britain "has come to an end and is giving way to permanent church work." The Missouri Synod, it said, "holds that joint church work involving Word and Sacrament can be done only with churches with whom doctrinal unity has been established." As the member churches of the NLC and the LWF are not in fellowship with Missouri, it added, "it cannot consistently conduct church work jointly with the NLC and/or LWF."

The statement also disclosed that the Missouri Synod has granted its two sister congregations in London a release to establish the Evangelical Lutheran Church of England (ELCE) and has entrusted its interest in, and concern for, Lutheranism in England to the care of the new church.

Further, it said, the Missouri Synod has pledged its "wholehearted moral and financial support" to the ELCE in its endeavor "to foster and expand Lutheranism in England; to achieve doctrinal unity among Lutherans in England; and to give financial aid to such churches or church bodies in Great Britain as share the doctrinal position of the ELCE or will work together with the ELCE in an earnest endeavor to establish full doctrinal unity and fellowship on the basis of Holy Scripture."

In his reply to Dr. Mayer's letter, Dr. Empie expressed the belief that the joint work of the NLC and Missouri in Great Britain has been "positively beneficial for the cause of Christ and the strengthening of Lutheranism in Great Britain."

"Personally I look forward to the day—and I know that in this hope many pastors of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod join me—when your great church body will take its place with other Lutherans in the world in co-operative activities which further the advancement of the Kingdom of Christ through churches of the Lutheran confession," he added.

Dr. Empie said he accepted the Missouri Synod's decision "with full understanding and without impairment of our cordial relationships" and voiced the conviction that the action "will not interrupt the development of closer working relationships between our respective groups."

## BOOK REVIEW

*All books reviewed in this periodical may be procured from or through Concordia Publishing House, 3558 South Jefferson Avenue, St. Louis 18, Missouri.*

### **THE EPISTLES OF PAUL TO THE PHILIPPIANS AND TO PHILEMON** (*The New International Commentary on the New Testament*).

By Jacob J. Mueller. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1955. 193 pages and indices. Cloth. \$4.00.

This commentary is part of a series published under the general editorship of Dr. N. B. Stonehouse of Westminster Theological Seminary. The whole set is an astonishing undertaking on the part of Reformed and Presbyterian theologians who follow in the conservative tradition of Dr. J. Gresham Machen. A number of volumes have appeared before this one.

The author of the present volume is a professor at the Seminary in Stellenbosch, South Africa. He is both an exegete and systematician. In general, this work meets the best standards of conservative scholarship.

Dr. Mueller was chosen to do this volume primarily because of his specialized knowledge of the great Christological passage in Philippians 2. The author is correct, we feel, when he refers the opening phrases of Philippians 2:5-8 to the *Logos asarkos*. Yet it seems strange that for his authority on the use of the aorist in verse 6 Dr. Mueller should appeal to a tertiary source, Gwynn's *Speaker's Commentary*. One has the feeling that much of what has been done in recent years on this particular passage was not considered. For example, there is much to say for the suggestion that in verse 7 the period should come after the participle λαβών. Moreover, exception might be taken to the statement on page 81: "The kenosis of Christ . . . consisted in his 'taking the form of a servant' and 'being made in the likeness of man.'" Some of the best studies on this admittedly difficult text apply the *kenosis* only to the former phrase. In other words, a distinction is made between the *kenosis* and the humiliation that follows. It is also regrettable that the author did not come to a clean decision on the significance of the term ἀπαγμός.

Of course, the passage under question is extremely knotty. It is not completely fair to require a man to stake his reputation on a clear statement of the significance of these words of St. Paul. Nevertheless, since the volume was assigned to this particular author because of his presumed competence in this area, his failure to come fully to grips with the problem is to be lamented. It detracts somewhat from the able treatment which has become characteristic of this series of commentaries.

MARTIN H. SCHARLEMANN

*ESSENTIAL BOOKS FOR A PASTOR'S LIBRARY: BASIC AND RECOMMENDED BOOKS*, selected and annotated by the faculty of Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Va., 2d ed., Richmond: Union Theological Seminary, 1955. 54 pages. Paper. 75 cents.

Here is an excellent bibliography of theological literature in English. It distinguishes between "essential" and "recommended" books. Its pithy characterizations help to make even a bibliography interesting—and far more valuable than any mere list of titles could be. The value might have been increased, however, if modern available (even though less satisfactory) substitutes had been suggested for some of the old, long-out-of-print classics. For example, R. M. Grant's *The Bible in the Church* (Macmillan, 1948) would serve as a substitute for F. W. Farrar's *History of Interpretation* (Macmillan, 1886), suggested on page nine. The value of this bibliography as a guide to the thought of modern Protestantism will be great even for the average pastor or student, who can hardly hope to own the large number of books designated as "essential."

EDGAR M. KRENTZ

*GENERAL REVELATION*. By G. C. Berkouwer. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1955. 336 pages. Cloth. \$4.00.

In this volume, the fifth of his studies in dogmatics to appear in English, Professor Berkouwer comes to grips with some of today's most controversial theological problems. Karl Barth's offensive against natural theology is balanced with a chapter on Rome's doctrine of natural theology. Thus present and medieval thinking on this subject is put into convenient juxtaposition for comparison and contrast. Barth's position meets its match in the criticism of Emil Brunner and Paul Althaus. Bultmann's conception of revelation is elucidated in a chapter answering the question: "Is the Revelation of Christ Exclusive?" The author's answer to this question is negative. Biblical revelation, he holds, goes beyond that part of Scripture which treats explicitly of Christ. With regard to God's revelation in nature he insists that, in the most profound sense, no true knowledge of the revelation of God in the works of His hands is obtainable without faith in Christ. This volume is a worthy addition to the previous four. No student of systematic theology can afford to ignore it.

L. W. SPITZ

*KERYGMA UND DOGMA, Zeitschrift für theologische Forschung und kirchliche Lehre*. Vol. I, No. 1, January 1955. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht. Quarterly, each issue about 80 pages. DM 9.80 per year.

The launching of a new periodical is a big event, especially when the market is already flooded and the new arrival is a theological journal,

highly professional and technical, reducing the popular appeal to nil. Many magazines ought never have been born, and they render their greatest service to humanity by a prompt demise.

Not so *Kerygma und Dogma*. We hail this new periodical, a quarterly, with great rejoicing. It promises in every way to make a distinguished and valuable contribution to theological literature. The format is handy, the paper excellent, and the type beautifully readable. The high quality of the contents is assured, as a mere listing of the men behind the venture will sufficiently prove. The managing editor is Wilfried Jöst, Neuendettelsau. The editorial committee includes Gerhard Glöge, Jena; Regin Prenter, Aarhus; and Edmund Schlink, Heidelberg. Others responsible for the publication are Peter Brunner, Heidelberg; Oscar Cullmann, Basel; N. A. Dahl, Oslo; R. Josefson, Uppsala; Ernst Kinder, Münster; F. Lau, Leipzig; A. Lauha, Helsinki; W. Maurer, Erlangen; G. Merz, Neuendettelsau; G. von Rad, Heidelberg; K. E. Skydsgaard, Copenhagen; H. Vogel, Berlin; and Gustav Wingren, Lund. It appears that most shades of opinion in the new confessional Lutheranism of Europe will be well represented, which will make for great variety as well as, of course, different levels of quality. As an appetizer consider the rich fare offered in this first number: Schlink, "Weisheit und Torheit" (a discussion of Luther's 1518 Heidelberg Theses); Glöge, "Der theologische Personalismus als dogmatisches Problem"; Prenter, "Das Augsburgische Bekenntnis und die römisch-katholische Messopferlehre"; Brunner, "Charismatische und methodische Schriftauslegung nach Augustins Prolog zu *De doctrina christiana*"; Jöst, "*Verhängnis und Hoffnung der Neuzeit*, kritische Gedanken zu Friedrich Gogartens Buch."

HERBERT J. A. BOUMAN

#### LOOKING AT LIFE THROUGH THE EYES OF THE SPECTATOR.

A selection from the writings of John Helmer Olson. Edited by Eric J. Gustavson and Rudolph W. Jonson. Rock Island: Augustana Book Concern, 1955. xii and 95 pages. Cloth. \$1.75.

A short story, a sermon, a lecture, poems, and incidental bits of writing complete these selections from the literary remains of the late Dr. John H. Olson. "The Imagination of a Parson," a lecture delivered at Augustana Seminary, is excellent. There are other delightful bits; the poem "A Summer Psalm" (p. 36) is particularly good. The editorial on "Church Unity" (pp. 4, 5) is not sympathetic to the Synodical Conference. The editors of this memorial volume have made selections which make interesting reading.

CARL S. MEYER

*THIS IS THE LIFE*. By Helen Chappel White. Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1955. 254 pages. Cloth. \$3.50.

Ten stories based on the scripts of "This Is the Life," the television broadcast of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, present the fictional Fisher family. The transcriptions into narrative form are sprightly. Readers

of this journal are interested in the theological implications. They center in the witness given by Christians at work in their calling. The explicitly theological defining of the redemptive work of Christ as basic for this witness is apparent in a number of the scripts. From the point of television this explicitness is remarkable. The controversy will long continue whether radio, and for that matter the setting forth of the Christian calling in any guise, is in the domain of explicit evangelism or of pre-evangelism. Very frequently the producers of this program, as this book indicates, have succeeded in both.

RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

### BOOKS RECEIVED

(The mention of a book in this list acknowledges its receipt and does not preclude a further discussion of its contents in the "Book Review" section.)

*The Christian Conscience and War.* By the Members of the Commission on Christian Conscience and War. New York: Church Peace Mission, n.d. 40 pages. Paper. 25 cents. At the invitation of the Church Peace Mission (which in turn grew out of the Conference on Church and War held in Detroit, Mich., in 1950), 32 men and women, all of them theologians or religious leaders, prepared this statement. Lutherans on the Commission were C. Franklin Koch, E. Paul Scherer, and Robert F. Weiskotten. The first part of the statement discusses the problem in terms of agreements between pacifists and nonpacifists. Part Two considers the resources of the church in terms of love and of the meaning of history. The third part brings the conclusions of the commission. Stressed are the need for a united voice, the possibility that a decisive break with war on the part of the church would be the most practical step that could be taken, and the need for true ecumenicity, which requires that the intervention of the ecumenical church in international conflicts should always be essentially as a reconciler.

*Christianity in the Apostolic Age.* By T. Purves. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1955. xx and 343 pages. Cloth. \$3.00. This history of the Apostolic Church on the basis of the New Testament documents was written as a textbook for the use of Bible study groups as well as of college and seminary classes. The original printing, of which the present edition is a photolithoprinted reissue, came out in 1900. The author, who died the following year, was Professor of New Testament Literature and Exegesis in Princeton Theological Seminary and a prolific contributor to theological journals and nineteenth century Bible dictionaries.

*The Grammar of Prophecy: A Systematic Guide through Biblical Prophecy.* By Robert Baker Girdlestone. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1955. xiii and 192 pages. Cloth. \$2.50. Robert Baker Girdlestone, a 19th century Anglican theologian, linguistic scholar, and missionary leader, is best known for his *Synonyms of the Old Testament*. The present title is a photolithoprinted reissue of a two-generation old inquiry into the phenomena of Biblical prophecy. About one fifth of the book is devoted to unfulfilled eschatological prophecy.

*Lectures on the Epistle to the Romans.* By H. A. Ironside. New York: Loizeaux Brothers, 1954. 176 pages. Cloth. \$2.00. This is the tenth printing of notes on lectures delivered by the author to the students of Moody Bible Institute of Chicago and the Evangelical Theological College of Dallas and first published in 1928.

*Notes on the Minor Prophets.* By H. A. Ironside. New York: Loizeaux Brothers, 1955. 464 pages. Cloth. \$3.00. These notes, first published in 1909, are designed to stress the practical application of the Minor Prophets "as giving important teaching for a remnant people in a day of decline, while not neglecting their dispensational bearing." This is the sixth printing.

*Teen-Agers Need Parents (Parent Guidance Series No. IV).* By A. J. Buelmann. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1955. 47 pages. Paper. 30 cents. The author, a pastor and himself the father of teen-agers, has designed this booklet for parents "to give them understandings, attitudes, and skills to deal successfully with the challenging job of leading their teen-agers through these important years." It can be used equally well for private or group study. The suggestion of Dr. Oscar E. Feucht in the preface, that our parishes get it into the hands of parents at the time when their children are being confirmed and are entering high school, is an admirable one.

*Expository Outlines on the Whole Bible. Vol. 14: St. John XIII Through Acts.* By Charles Simeon. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1955. vii and 604 pages. Cloth. \$3.95. The third volume of the new photolithoprinted reissue of the eighth edition of *Horae Homileticae* completes the Gospels and the Acts in 141 "outlines."

*The Power of Prayer and the Prayer of Power.* By Reuben Archer Torrey. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House. 246 pages. Cloth. \$2.50. This reissue of a well-known work by Reuben Archer Torrey (1856—1928), the noted revivalist and the associate of Dwight L. Moody at the turn of the century, gives it new currency after a lapse of three decades. Albert R. Perkins, who writes the introduction to the 1955 edition, calls it "the greatest book I have ever read on prayer during 32 years in the ministry."

*Die himmlische Welt im Urchristentum und Spätjudentum.* By Hans Bietenhard. Tübingen: Verlag J. C. P. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1951. 295 pages. Paper. DM 24.—.

*Ministering to the Sick.* By William A. Lauterbach. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1955. x and 191 pages. Cloth. \$2.00.

*Pascals Bild vom Menschen: Eine Studie über die Dialektik von Natur und Gnade in den "Pensées."* By Arthur Rich. Zürich: Zwingli-Verlag, 1953. 214 pages. Paper. Sw. Fr. 13.40.

*Roger Williams: His Contribution to the American Tradition.* By Perry Miller. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1953. xviii and 273 pages. Cloth. \$3.00.

*Toward a Theology of Evangelism.* By Julian N. Hartt. New York: Abingdon Press, 1955. 123 pages. Cloth. \$2.00.

*Wilhelm Löbe als Liturg und Liturgiker.* By Hans Kressel. Neuendetelsau: Freimund-Verlag, 1952. 267 pages. Cloth. DM 9,60.

*Within Two Worlds.* By David Munroe Cory. New York: Friendship Press, 1955. xiii and 177 pages. Cloth. \$2.00.

*Work and Vocation: A Christian Discussion.* Edited by John Oliver Nelson. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954. 224 pages. Cloth. \$2.75.

*Genesis I—XI: Introduction and Commentary.* By Alan Richardson. New York: The Macmillan Company (London: SCM Press), 1953. 134 pages. Cloth. \$1.75.

*Better Leaders for Your Church.* By Weldon Crossland. New York: Abingdon Press, 1955. 128 pages. Cloth. \$2.00.

*Das Rätsel der Taufe: Ein Wort zur Verständigung.* By Karl Ecke. Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann Verlag, 1952. 28 pages. Paper. DM 2,80.

*The Strangeness of the Church.* By Daniel Jenkins. Garden City: Doubleday and Company, 1955. 188 pages. Cloth. \$2.95.

*The Priesthood: A Translation of the "Peri Hierosynes" of St. John Chrysostom.* By W. A. Jurgens. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1955. xxv and 133 pages. Cloth. \$2.50.

*Anglican Public Worship.* By Colin Dunlop. Chicago: Alec R. Allenson (London: SCM Press), 1953. 128 pages. Cloth. \$2.00.

*The Right Job for You.* By Alfred P. Klausler. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1955. 23 pages. Paper. 10 cents.

*Why Was I Born?* By Elmer A. Kettner. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1955. 12 pages. Paper. 10 cents.

*God's Verdict: "Not Guilty!"* By Alfred Doerffler. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1955. 12 pages. Paper. 10 cents.

*So You Drink?* St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1955. 8 pages. Paper. 4 cents.

*Balanced Living.* By Edward A. Jenne. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1955. 12 pages. Paper. 10 cents.

*How to Teach the Revelation.* By Joseph M. Gettys. Richmond: John Knox Press, 1955. 56 pages. Paper. 75 cents.

*The Decline of Wisdom.* By Gabriel Marcel. New York: Philosophical Library, 1955. viii and 56 pages. Cloth. \$2.50.

*Principles of Expository Preaching.* By Merrill F. Unger. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1955. 267 pages. Cloth. \$3.50.

*The Defense of the Faith.* By Cornelius van Til. Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1955. xii and 436 pages. Cloth. \$4.95.

*Men Who Shape Belief: Major Voices in American Theology, Vol. II.* By David Wesley Soper. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1955. 224 pages. Cloth. \$3.50.

*Christian Missions and the Judgment of God.* By David M. Paton. London: SCM Press, 1953. 79 pages. Cloth. 6/6.

*Familiar Prayers: Their Origin and History.* By Herbert Thurston. Westminster: The Newman Press, 1953. vii and 200 pages. Cloth. \$3.50.

*Religion in Britain Since 1900.* By G. Stephens Spinks, E. L. Allen, and James Parkes. London: Andrew Dakers, 1952. 254 pages. Cloth. 18/—.

*Origen's Treatise on Prayer.* By Eric George Jay. London: S. P. C. K., 1954. x and 237 pages. Cloth. 27/6.

*Lyman Abbott, Christian Evolutionist: A Study in Religious Liberalism.* By Ira V. Brown. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953. xi and 303 pages. Cloth. \$5.00.

*Religious Symbolism.* Edited by F. Ernest Johnson. New York: The Institute for Religious and Social Studies (Harper and Brothers), 1955. ix and 263 pages. Cloth. \$2.50.

*The Harmony Society: A 19th-Century American Utopia.* By Christiana F. Knoedler. New York: Vantage Press, 1954. xi and 160 pages. Cloth. \$3.00.

*Die Basler Kirche und Theologie im Zeitalter der Hochorthodoxie.* By Max Geiger. Zollikon-Zürich: Evangelischer Verlag, 1952. xi and 439 pages. Cloth. Sw. Fr. 26.—.

*The Council of Chalcedon: A Historical and Doctrinal Survey.* By R. V. Sellers. London: S. P. C. K., 1953. xviii and 361 pages. Cloth. 37/6.

*Die Glaubensstufen des Judentums.* By Friedrich Thieberger. Stuttgart: W. Spemann Verlag, 1952. 207 pages. Boards. DM 11,80.

*The Book of Acts in History.* By Henry J. Cadbury. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1955. vii and 170 pages. Cloth. \$2.75.

*Meditations in Luke.* By August Van Ryn. New York: Loizeaux Brothers, 1953. x and 278 pages. Cloth. \$3.00.

*A Man of Tarsus: Life and Work of Paul.* By Harold L. Phillips. Anderson: The Warner Press, 1955. vii and 104 pages. Paper, 75 cents; Cloth, \$1.50.

*The Rediscovery of the Bible.* By William Neil. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954. 255 pages. Cloth. \$3.00.

*Medieval Panorama: The English Scene from Conquest to Reformation.* By G. G. Coulton. New York: Meridian Books (The Noonday Press), 1955. xiv and 801 pages. Paper. \$1.95.

*Mysticism: A Study in the Nature and Development of Man's Spiritual Consciousness.* By Evelyn Underhill. New York: The Noonday Press, 1955. xviii and 519 pages. Paper. \$1.95.

*The Christian Hope: The Presence and the Parousia.* By J. E. Fison. New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1954. xi and 268 pages. Cloth. 21/—.

*The Silver Chair.* By C. S. Lewis, illustrated by Pauline Baynes. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1953. 208 pages. \$2.75.

*Holy Mass: Approaches the Mystery.* By A.-M. Roguet, translated from the French by Carisbrooke Dominicans. Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1953. 120 pages. Paper. \$1.25.

*The Political Ethics of Alexander Campbell.* By Harold L. Lunger. St. Louis: The Bethany Press, 1954. 304 pages. Cloth. \$3.00.

*The Person of Christ.* By G. C. Berkouwer, translated from the Dutch by John Vriend. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1954. 368 pages. Cloth. \$4.00.

*The Anglican Church in New Jersey.* By Nelson R. Burr. Philadelphia: The Church Historical Society, 1954. xvi and 768 pages. Cloth. \$10.00.

*An Introduction to the Study of Christian Missions.* By Harold R. Cook. Chicago: Moody Press, 1954. 256 pages. Cloth. \$3.00.

*The Early Church and the Coming Great Church.* By John Knox. New York: Abingdon Press, 1955. 160 pages. \$2.50.

*The Churches and the Schools: American Protestantism and Popular Elementary Education.* By Francis X. Curran. Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1954. vii and 152 pages. Cloth. \$3.00.

*The God of the Witches.* By Margaret Alice Murray. New York: Oxford University Press, 1952. 212 pages. Cloth. \$4.00.

*The Folks Arts of Norway.* By Janice S. Stewart. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1953. xvii and 246 pages., with 152 illustrations, 5 color plates and two maps. Cloth. \$10.00.

*Die Ehe im Pietismus.* By Fritz Tanner. Zürich: Zwingli Verlag, 1952. 242 pages. Paper. Sw. Fr. 11.50.

*The National Pastorals of the American Hierarchy (1792—1919).* Edited by Peter Guilday. Westminster: The Newman Press, 1954. xiii and 358 pages. Cloth. \$5.00.

*The Episcopal Church and Its Work.* By Power Mills Dawley. Greenwich: The Seabury Press, 1955. ix and 301 pages. Cloth. \$2.50.

*Salvation in Scientific Age.* By Leon M. Macon. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1955. 121 pages. Cloth. \$1.75.

*How to Start Counseling: Building the Counseling Program in the Local Church.* By William E. Hulme. New York: Abingdon Press, 1955. 157 pages. Cloth. \$2.50.

*The Book of Jeremiah and Lamentations: An Exposition.* By Charles R. Erdman. Westwood: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1955. 162 pages. Cloth. \$2.00.

*Modern Illustrations for Public Speakers: Likings and Leavings.* By Robert G. Lee. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1955. 121 pages. Cloth. \$1.75.

*The Tabernacle: The House of Blood.* By M. R. DeHaan. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1955. 185 pages. Cloth. \$2.50.

*Biblical Demonology: A Study of the Spiritual Forces Behind the Present World Unrest.* By Merrill F. Unger. Second Edition. Wheaton: Van Kampen Press, 1953. xvi and 250 pages. Cloth. \$4.00.

*The New England Mind from Colony to Province.* By Perry Miller. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953. xi and 513 pages. Cloth. \$6.50.

*Saint Elizabeth of Hungary: A Story of Twenty-four Years.* By Nesta de Robeck. Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1954. ix and 211 pages. Cloth. \$3.00.

*Bergsonian Philosophy and Thomism.* By Jacques Maritain, translated from the French by Mabelle L. and J. Gordon Anderson. New York: Philosophical Library, 1955. 383 pages. Cloth. \$6.00.

*Christ the Conqueror: Ideas of Conflict and Victory in the New Testament.* By Ragnar Leivestad. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1954. 320 pages. Cloth. \$5.00.

*Revival Sermon Outlines.* Edited by Al Bryant. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1955. 94 pages. Paper. \$1.00.

*The Physical Phenomena of Mysticism.* By Herbert Thurston, edited by J. H. Crehan. Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1952. 419 pages. Paper. \$6.00.

*The Mind at Ease.* By Alfred Doerffler. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1955. 131 pages. Cloth, \$1.95. Paper, \$1.00.

*This World of Ours.* By Abram Glaser. New York: Philosophical Library, 1955. xiii and 492 pages. Cloth. \$5.00.

*Hardness of Heart: A Contemporary Interpretation of the Doctrine of Sin.* By Edmond la B. Cherbonnier. Garden City: Doubleday and Company, 1955. 188 pages. Cloth. \$2.95.

*Report to the Creator.* By Jerome Ellison. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1955. 246 pages. Cloth. \$3.00.

*Expository Outlines on the Whole Bible. Vol. 15: Romans.* By Charles Simeon. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1955. viii and 600 pages. Cloth. \$3.95. The 110 "outlines" in this volume, averaging close to 6 pages apiece, cover most of the important texts that a preacher is likely to find in the Epistle to the Romans.

*Stewardship Sermonettes.* By Richard V. Clearwaters. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House (Wheaton: Van Kampen Press), 1955. 120 pages. Cloth. \$1.50.

*Religion (Vocational and Professional Monographs, No. 18).* By James A. Nichols, Jr. Cambridge: Bellman Publishing Company, 1955. Paper, \$1.00.

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